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Saipan Tribune

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:

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INSIDE



IT&E Donation

IT&E donates \$1,000 to benefit the victims of Typhoon Sendong in the Philippines.

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X Factor

Melanie Amaro wins the Fox talent competition "The X Factor."

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No funding identified yet to build Koblerville Junior High. **PAGE 3**
Fund says OPA owes \$150K in unpaid contribution. **PAGE 5**



Crisis, immigration woes dampen holiday shopping

A woman makes her last-minute Christmas shopping for toys at Lollipops store in Garapan yesterday afternoon. Gone are the days when many grocery stores and shopping centers on Saipan were filled with last-minute holiday shoppers as the financial crisis has worsened and uncertainty related to the federal immigration status of foreign workers forces many to hold on to their dollars instead of spending them on Christmas feasts and gifts.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

In observance of the holidays, the *Saipan Tribune* will not be published on Dec. 26, 2011 and Jan. 2, 2012.

Santa Claus still flying high in new poll

By CONNIE CASS
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON (AP)—Why do kids believe a chubby guy in a flying sleigh can deliver joy across America? Because their parents do. A whopping 84 percent

of grown-ups were once children who trusted in Santa's magic, and lots cling to it still.

Things are changing fast these days, with toddlers wishing for iPads, grade schoolers emailing their Christmas lists and moms wrestling over bargain toys at midnight sales. Despite all the pressures on the rituals of the season, an AP-GfK poll confirms that families are sticking by old St. Nick.

"It's important for kids to have something to believe in," says great-grand-

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CLARISSA V. DAVID

This boy gets an early Christmas present after Santa Claus visited him and the rest of the students at the Joaquina M. Rabauli-man Head Start Center in Garapan/Chinatown Thursday morning. The visit was part of a program organized by the Saipan Soccer School for the over 100 young learners ages 3 to 6 years.



By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

One are the days when last-minute Christmas shoppers would crowd grocery stores and shopping centers or form long lines at cashiers' booths, with the financial crisis deepening and lingering immigration uncertainties shrinking the customer base, forcing many to hold on to their hard-earned money until they secure federal work status.

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At least 3 more lawmakers to take drug tests

» **Tebuteb: Drug testing should be mandatory for elected officials**

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

At least three more lawmakers will undergo drug testing to help remove suspi-

cion in anyone's mind about lawmakers, following the arrest of Rep. Ray Palacios (Cov-Saipan) on charges of drug trafficking and alleged drug use.

As of yesterday, nine lawmakers have already heeded House Speaker Eli Cabrera's (R-Saipan) call for voluntary drug testing. Delegate Gregorio Kilili

See DRUG on Page 4



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Local

Trade institute welcomed over 200 students in 2011

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

Northern Marianas Trade Institute welcomed over 200 enrollees in 2011, a figure that the institution considers a success despite experiencing a 35-percent increase in students dropping out.

Institute staff disclosed yesterday that the increased enrollments were mainly in the electrical, automotive, carpentry, culinary arts, and plumbing programs.

According to Victorino Cepeda, NMTI education director, they are seeing a couple

of students drop out of classes each month, mainly due to lack of transportation in going to and from school.

Despite the school's efforts to assist and motivate these students, Cepeda said the lack of resources to extend more help hampers them.

Cepeda, however, expects more students to enroll in 2012 as NMTI is now laying out its plans for the new year.

From two classes weekly, the institute will stretch this to five times a week sessions starting January, according to NMTI employees. This will be discussed in the upcoming

open house on Tuesday, Dec. 27, at 5:30pm, during which more instructors will be introduced to enrollees.

As of yesterday, the school has 106 students, in addition to over 60 potential enrollees who will start classes next month. Unlike colleges and universities, NMTI operates using program modules and not by semester and academic terms.

NMTI said the additional classes are aimed to shorten the modules and programs of students—from approximately three years to less than two years. Due to lack of operational funds to build more classrooms, NMTI

right now offers limited classes.

Cepeda admitted that their efforts to seek funding support from the Legislature—through a bill that proposes to give the trade institute 25 percent of SHEFA's budget—have failed.

For now, he said NMTI is surviving because of the \$200,000 grant award that was obtained with the help of Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan and some grant assistance from the Department of Commerce.

He disclosed that the institution has 10 employees and intends to add eight more personnel in anticipation of more classes next month.

He said the institute's owner, Anthony Pellegrino, is still very much committed to continue the school's operation despite funding challenges.

The institution's mission is to train local citizens in various fields of interest.

Cepeda pointed out that, upon graduation, students are assisted in finding jobs or in forming

their own company. By doing this they will become an asset to the community.

NMTI is a private, non-profit, non-government, incorporated institute, organized in April 2008. The institution and its instructors have been certified by the National Center for Construction, Education and Research.

United ties up with Guam's Baldyga Group

» BIG Media to produce new Japanese in-flight arrival video for Guam

GUAM—United Airlines, a wholly owned subsidiary of United Continental Holdings, Inc. announced yesterday the appointment of BIG Media, a Baldyga Group company, to be its authorized representative in the production of its new Japanese in-flight arrival video for Guam. The video will be shown on all inbound flights to Guam from the 10 cities that United serves from Japan including Tokyo (Narita), Nagoya, Osaka, Sapporo, Sendai, Niigata, Hiroshima, Okayama, Fukuoka, and Okinawa.

BIG Media will also be responsible for the account management of United's advertising sponsorships that will part of the video. The new in-flight video presents a great opportunity for advertisers to communicate the Guam brand and promote the many and unique product offerings to both new and repeat visitors from Japan.

Matt Miller, United's managing director, Asia/Pacific Business Development, said, "United's new Guam destination video will be shot in high definition and promises to showcase the "Best of Guam" in a compelling, visually rich

multimedia presentation. We are pleased to partner on the project with Guam's leading local production company, BIG Media, a division of Baldyga Group."

Mark Baldyga, president & CEO of the Baldyga Group, said, "We're thrilled to partner with United Airlines, Guam's leading airline, on the production of a high quality in-flight video highlighting Guam's world class ocean and quality attractions. With over 700,000 seats annually from ten cities in Japan, United is the partner of choice offering sponsors tremendous exposure opportunity to inbound visitors."

United Continental Holdings, Inc. is the holding company for both United Airlines and Continental Airlines.

BIG Media has a vast array of video production expertise that includes television, digital signage, web and e-ticketing services. Its television division operates five channels including the Visitors Channel in Japanese, English and Korean. The Information Channel and The Hotel Channel feature customized hotel information for affiliated hotel partners. (United)

Wishing Everyone a Joyous Christmas!

Happy Holidays

On behalf of our employees and management team, we'd like to take this opportunity to thank all our friends, associates and business partners for all your kind support throughout the year.

Happy Holidays and a safe and prosperous New Year!



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No funding identified yet to build Koblerville Junior High

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

A funding source has yet to be identified by both the Public School System and the Executive Branch in order to build

another middle school on Saipan, according to Education Commissioner Rita A. Sablan in her report to the Board of Education on Thursday.

This comes even as the government has already ac-

quired a property in Koblerville for the school's permanent location.

Sablan disclosed that she, along with some members of her leadership team, including financial consultant Ed Tenorio, federal programs officer Tim Thornburgh, and CIP committee chair Lucy Blanco Maratita, recently met with Gov. Benigno R. Fitial to talk about the ongoing preliminary efforts for the project.

The commissioner reported that PSS will receive from the Department of Public Lands in January the official documents relating to the purchase of the Koblerville property.

A private lot in Koblerville

was purchased by the Northern Marianas Housing Corp. in July for the proposed middle school where some 600 students from Hopwood Junior High School will be transferred.

Each fiscal year, NMHC receives about \$800,000 in community development block grant funds from the U.S.

Department of Housing and Urban Development. The housing corporation earlier committed to allot three years of these CDBG grants for the new middle school, which is estimated to cost over \$2 mil-

lion to build.

Sablan reported to the board that for the architectural and engineering design of the building, the governor has proposed to use the same CDBG block grant monies to complete the project's A&E. The PSS-CIP office, according to the commissioner, is now working with the housing corporation in doing these preliminary works.

Saipan Tribune learned that PSS wants to construct 10 building facilities: four classroom buildings with 27 classrooms, a cafeteria, a li-

brary, a vocational building, a horticulture building, a music building, and a water storage tank. The entire facility is estimated to house up to 700 students.

In an earlier interview, Sablan had said that PSS will closely work with the Executive Branch and the office of CNMI Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan to secure the needed funding for the planned Koblerville Junior High School. This after NMHC board admitted that there is no way the agency—through its community development block grant—can provide all the needed funds for the project to the tune of \$8 million.



Sablan

Teen gets 7 days for punching cousin

Superior Court Presiding Judge Robert C. Naraja has imposed a seven-day prison term on a Tinian teenager who beat up his cousin inside a car's trunk out of jealousy.

In a written order issued Monday, Naraja sentenced 18-year-old Demetrius H. Pettis to a year in prison, all suspended except for seven days, for assault and battery, with credit for the two days he has already served in jail.

The judge ordered Pettis to start serving the remaining five days of his sentence on Saipan on Jan. 6, 2012, at 5pm.

He will pay for the expense associated with traveling to and from the Saipan prison.

After completing his sentence, Pettis will be placed on probation for two years. He was ordered to pay a \$100 fine, \$200 probation fee, and \$25 court assessment fee.

Naraja ordered Pettis to pay his cousin and another victim in a separate case restitution in an amount not to exceed \$250 to cover the cost of any medical fees associated with their injuries as a result of the assault.

Naraja also required Pettis to perform 50 hours of community service, complete any recommended counseling at the Community Guidance Center, and write a letter of apology to his three victims in the two assault cases.

Pettis is prohibited from consuming any alcoholic bev-

erages.

Pettis pleaded guilty to assault and battery. The remaining charges, including in the other case, were dismissed.

Pettis repeatedly punched his 14-year-old cousin in the face on June 10, 2011.

Last June 26, the victim's mother, who flew from Hawaii after learning about the beating, called Saipan Tribune and disclosed the beating of his son, saying then that the Tinian police have yet to arrest the suspect.

Tinian police finally arrested Pettis on July 1.

Police said when the officers responded to Huang Shun Supermarket on June 10 at 10:13pm after receiving a call about a disturbance, they observed the victim sitting in a parked car and crying. The officers noticed bruising and swelling under the boy's right eye.

Police said investigation showed that Pettis attacked the victim in a jealous rage after learning that his girlfriend had gone out with the victim and other friends.

Police said Pettis also previously assaulted another person on Tinian. (*Ferdie de la Torre*)

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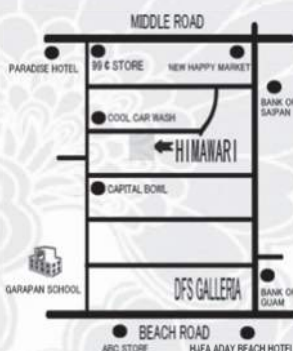
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Suspect claims cops seized \$996 from her

» Naraja to OAG: Govt should explain why it has not released the money

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

The Superior Court has ordered the Office of the Attorney General to explain why it should not be held in contempt for not releasing the \$996 cash that was seized last year by some police officers from a woman whose boyfriend was arrested for trafficking methamphetamine or "ice."

Presiding Judge Robert C. Naraja set the show-cause hearing for Jan.

26, 2012, at 9am, directing the OAG to explain why the \$996 has not been released to Lin Lin Song until now.

In his order issued Thursday, Naraja said that, at the Nov. 28, 2011, change of plea hearing, Song, who appeared with counsel, chief public defender Adam Hardwicke, alleged that some police officers seized \$996 from her at the time of her and her boyfriend's arrest.

At the hearing, Song entered an Alford plea to the offense of child neglect. The remaining charges were dismissed

and she was released that same day after being sentenced to 29 days in prison, with credit for the 29 days she has already spent in jail.

Naraja then scheduled a hearing on Dec. 15, 2011, for the failure to release the money to Song.

At the Dec. 15, 2011, hearing, assistant attorney general Darren Robinson appeared for the government and informed the court that the government was not prepared to argue the issue. This prompted Naraja to set the show-cause hearing for Jan. 26, 2012.

Court records showed that Song and her boyfriend, Hong Wang, were

arrested on July 20, 2010, after a buy-bust operation targeting Wang for "ice" trafficking.

Song and their 2-year-old baby were passengers in the car where the reported buy took place. Police officers pulled over the car near the Northern Marianas College.

In a motion to suppress evidence, Song's former counsel, assistant public defender Richard C. Miller, said that police officers searched Song and Wang's residence in San Jose without a warrant.

Although Song was present, Miller

said the officers did not seek or obtain her consent to do the search.

In court papers, assistant attorney general Peter Prestley said that all the money used for the sting operation were found in Song's wallet.

Prestley said Wang consented to a search of his apartment where law enforcement personnel also found drug paraphernalia and recovered \$976 cash.

Wang has already pleaded guilty to illegal possession of controlled substance and was sentenced to 18 months in prison.

SANTA

From Page 1

mother Wanda Smith of Norman, Okla.

And so they do. Year after year, Santa Claus survives the scoffers and the Scrooges and the 6-year-old playground skeptics. He endures belittling commercials that portray him shopping at Target or taking directions from an iPhone. He shrugs off scolds who say his bagful of toys overshadows the reason for the season.

Two-thirds of parents with kids under 18 say Santa's an important part of their celebrations this year. Moms, especially, have a soft spot for the man in red—71 percent of them say he's important, and that's a big jump from 58 percent just five years ago.

His overall popularity is up slightly from an AP-AOL poll in 2006, before the recession hit. In these bleaker times of homes lost to foreclosure and parents sweating out their next paychecks, the poll shows Santa riding high with families both wealthy and poor.

Maybe that's because the big guy's always known how to stretch a dollar to make a kid smile.

Smith, whose childhood gifts were mostly handmade by her mother—things like cookies and knit scarves—

remembers that every year Santa Claus managed to put one present under the tree for her to share with her two brothers (four more siblings came later).

"One year it was a bicycle, one year we had a sled. One year we got a puppy—his name was Jack and he was a border collie," recalls Smith, now 70.

"We didn't have a lot," she said, "but we didn't know it. Our mother and daddy made it a wonderful time for us."

In multicultural America, Father Christmas isn't just for Christians any more. Three-fourths of non-Christian adults say they believed in Santa when they were children. And half feel he's important to their holiday celebrations now.

Developmental psychologist Cyndy Scheibe, who's been interviewing kids about Santa since 1986, said lots of Jewish children told her that Santa Claus was real, even though he didn't stop at their houses on Christmas Eve.

And many non-Christian parents embrace Santa because they see Christmas serving as a secular as well as religious holiday in the U.S., she said.

"Santa Claus is more than someone who just comes and gives you a present, it's this whole spirit of giving and magic that you get to be a part of and celebrate," said Scheibe, an associate professor at Ithaca College in New York.

That's what keeps Santa going over the decades and across cultures, she said. "That, and there's almost nothing as much fun as getting to see your kid's face so completely excited."

Scheibe knows firsthand. She used to climb a ladder to the roof every Christmas, her daughter watching, to leave a key tied to a big red bow, because they didn't have a fireplace.

It's not all snowflakes and mistletoe in Santaland, however. Even among Christians, there's tension about how big a role, if any, a jolly old elf deserves in the celebration of Christ's birth.

Almost half of Americans polled said Santa detracts from the religious significance of Christmas more than he enhances it.

When she was growing up, Naomi Stenberg's fundamentalist Baptist parents didn't want her mixed up with Santa Claus or the Easter Bunny or Halloween trick-or-treating.

"I didn't understand why everybody else got to believe in Santa, and me and my brother didn't," says Stenberg, 32, now a stay-at-home mom in Baxter, Minn. "I felt left out."

Her own three children have gotten the full Kris Kringle experience, but sometimes she feels ill-equipped to handle the tough queries from her youngest, 6-year-old Rylen.

DRUG

From Page 1

Sablan (Ind-MP) was among those whose results came back "negative," while one other who underwent testing is still waiting for the result.

Rep. Ray Basa (Cov-Saipan), Rep. Ray Tebuteb (R-Saipan) and Rep. Tony Sablan separately said yesterday they will also undergo drug testing.

"I will take a drug test hopefully before the end of the year," said Basa.

Tebuteb, for his part, said in his opinion, drug testing among elected officials should be mandatory, just like ordinary government employees and members of boards and commissions who are required to undergo drug testing before being hired or confirmed.

Besides Cabrera and Delegate Sablan, the following have also undergone drug testing since October: Floor leader George Camacho (Ind-Saipan), Rep. Teresita Santos (Ind-Rota), Rep. Ray Yumul (R-Saipan), Rep. Frank Dela Cruz (R-Saipan), Rep. Edmund Villagomez (Cov-Saipan), Rep. Joseph Palacios (R-Saipan) and Rep. Fred Deleon Guerrero (Ind-Saipan). The latter has yet to get his results back.

Dela Cruz said the public wouldn't know whether their elected officials are drug-free if they don't undergo drug testing.

"Everyone should take a drug test, especially the one charged with drug trafficking," he said.

Rep. Ray Palacios (Cov-Saipan), who was arrested on charges of drug trafficking in October, has yet to undergo any drug test. Before his arrest, Ray Palacios told the media that he may have used drugs in the past or bought drugs for family members. He stepped down as chairman of the House Committee on Education in November.

Rep. Stanley Torres (Ind-Saipan), meanwhile, said yesterday he will not undergo drug testing but pointed out he is drug-free.

"Although I am advocating for the legalization of marijuana, I don't use drugs. It's every lawmaker's choice whether to have themselves tested for drugs or not. Like the speaker said, it's voluntary, not mandatory," said Torres, who introduced a bill legalizing marijuana for medicinal and recreational use, as well as a bill legalizing marijuana only for medicinal purpose.

Other House members either didn't want to comment or couldn't be reached for comment yesterday.

Another lawmaker said that just because one lawmaker was accused of using or selling drugs doesn't mean that all lawmakers should also be tested. Another one said taking the drug test is an added expense, especially for those who don't use drugs anyway.

Meanwhile, the Special Standing Committee on Official Conduct and Ethics that the speaker formed to investigate Rep. Palacios' alleged drug use has yet to come up with a report.

CRISIS

From Page 1

Clement Kaipat and his family spent almost the whole day yesterday "looking for the right gifts" to stretch their estimated \$300 budget for their children's toys and for exchange gifts.

"We started at around 10:30am and it's now almost 4pm but we still haven't found all the right gifts. We prepared for this occasion but the economy is really affecting everyone. The prices of toys and gifts have gone up so we have to be really picky," said Kaipat in an interview at the Lollipops store in Garapan. Lollipops is one of the most popular stores for children's toys and clothing on Saipan.

Despite the limited budget, he and his wife said they try to make the occasion as merry as possible for their four children.

Nhitz Manalo, supervisor at Payless Supermarket in Chalan Kanoa, is seeing an increase in the number of grocery shoppers this past few days because of the holidays but she said the number of shoppers and volume of sales are definitely a lot fewer and lesser this year than in previous years.

She said their daily sales during the holidays this year are \$2,000 to \$3,000 lesser than their sales last year.

"There's a big difference from the

sales of last year and the years before that. We believe it's because of the economy, the delayed release of rebate and refund checks, the work hour cuts, and the fact that many Filipinos have already gone home. As we all know, Christmas is such a big holiday for Filipinos and they really prepare lots of food. Those who are still here are also not spending as much because they don't know yet if their CW application or parole application will be approved. Many of them are also jobless now," said Manalo, herself a nonresident worker from the Philippines.

Manalo, who has been working on Saipan for almost 17 years, said her Christmas wish is for the CNMI economy to recover so that more people will regain employment.

Joy De Belen, 30, got her Christmas package yesterday at the U.S. Post Office in Chalan Kanoa. She said she ordered children's gifts, clothing, and other personal items online and have her relatives in Texas mail them to her to save money.

De Belen said her only wish is for her whole family to be able to remain in the CNMI. She said her husband is still waiting for his CW-1 petition to be granted. She said her husband also applied for a CW-2 status for her as dependent of a foreign worker.

"We have young children, and

they're both U.S. citizens—a 4-year-old and an 8-year-old. If our petitions are not approved, we will be forced to leave," said De Belen, who is also waiting for Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan's H.R. 1466 to be passed by Congress. The bill seeks a grant of CNMI-only resident status to four groups of people, including immediate relatives of U.S. citizens.

At the post office, at least one couple said they were lucky to find their child tax credit check in the mail just in time for Christmas.

Adrian Torre and his family, who made their Christmas grocery shopping at Joeten Shopping Center in Garapan yesterday, said the economy has generally affected "everyone in some ways."

"We are still doing okay but we hope the situation here doesn't get worse than it already is. We also wish there will be more job opportunities and better assistance for people in need," said Torre, of As Matuis.

George Moses, supervisor at Joeten Shopping Center in Garapan, said that people still want to keep the spirit of Christmas alive by buying gifts for their loved ones gifts, preparing food, and decorating their houses.

"We've seen increased shopping because of the holidays but I can't say whether we have more sales this year than last year. The holidays are not yet over," he said.

Moses also said despite the sad state of the economy, they were able to sell all of their Christmas trees.

"A week before Christmas, people were still looking for Christmas trees but we sold out everything. People still want to have their Christmas trees even though the economy is bad," he added.

He said Joeten Shopping Center in Garapan added cashiers for the holiday season, in anticipation of the volume of shoppers.

"We don't want customers to wait in line for a long time. We're always focused on customer service. Our Susupe branch also extended shopping hours because of the holidays," he added.

Jocelyn Palacios and Maria Calma, both sales associates at Lollipops, said the most saleable items at the store are pillow pets, Hello Kitty products, and children's bicycles, which were already sold out a week before Christmas. They said their 12-inch to 20-inch bicycles sold for \$89 to \$129 each.

"Bicycles sold out fast. People still want the best for their children," Palacios said.

Calma, who has worked at the store for seven years, said this year's volume of shoppers is much fewer compared to two years ago.

"We used to have long lines, but we don't see that now. Two years ago, sales were still high. But last year, it was really down and this year, it has gotten

worse. But because the holiday shopping is not over yet, we may still have the same volume of sales. We are hoping that will be the case," she added.

Eric Borja, a Dandan resident, was also at the store buying toys for his two godchildren.

"This is my first time to buy. I know the economy is down but it's a tradition to remember your loved ones on Christmas so I'm here," he said.

Naomi Sasaki, 19, also went to check their mailbox at the post office in Chalan Kanoa, and it was filled with magazines for the church and personal letters, including at least one Christmas card.

"My Christmas wish is for me to be able to stay here on Saipan longer," she said. The former Northern Marianas College student is here for the holidays, but she said she wanted to be able to find a part-time job here while waiting to be enrolled at the University of Guam.

The CNMI economy is not expected to recover soon, after being hit hard by the pullout of its garment industry and the continuous drop in tourist arrivals, coupled with high fuel, utility and shipping costs, smaller customer base, and uncertainties related to federalization of local immigration. The government budget of \$102 million for fiscal year 2012 has already shrunk to a level last seen some 22 years ago.

Fund says OPA owes \$150K in unpaid contribution

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

The NMI Retirement Fund disclosed that the Office of Public Auditor owes the pension agency a total of \$150,156 in

unpaid employer contributions, an amount the former board of trustees has tried to negotiate by offsetting its law-mandated remittance of 1 percent to OPA.

Fund internal auditor Lilian Pangelinan reported to the

board that since 2006, the Fund also failed to remit the 1 percent OPA fee as a result of unclear negotiations with the agency. Its total unpaid obligation now amounts to \$46,237 representing fiscal year 2011.

According to Fund officials, the former board of trustees has been negotiating with OPA the possibility of "off-setting" each other's obligations, but this was never realized for unclear reasons.

Fund trustees believe that the idea of a trade off or "off-setting" is not a good deal for the pension agency because the "employer contribution is not part of operation."

Board counsels confirmed that the trade off negotiation never happened at all between the two agencies. As a result, board chair Sixto Igisomar instructed Fund administrator Richard Villagomez to come up with its plan, subject to board action in the January meeting. Igisomar also recommended writing to OPA to memorialize "who owes and what."

Besides OPA, the Fund is also owed employer contribution totaling \$38,094,133 from other agencies and departments as of November. Majority of these unpaid contributions was a result of the implementation of several laws that changed the employer contribution rate of some agencies—from zero to 11 percent, to 24 percent, and 37 percent.

KagHS JROTC donates food for Christmas

Once again, the Kagman High School's Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps cadets showed their giving spirit with their annual JROTC Christmas canned food drive.

The cadets at Kagman High started collecting the goods since November to give to the Karidat Social Services, the premier social service arm in the CNMI, for needy fami-

lies on Saipan. KHS JROTC was able to collect over \$300 worth of food items. With the economy the way it is every little bit helps.

In an interview, the Ayuyu battalion commander, Cadet Lt. Col. Keisha Manglona, said: "JROTC is a program that teaches each cadet how to be a better citizen for our community and country. With this, we

are always proud and happy to give back to our community to show our appreciation for their continuous support."

"Christmas has always been known to be one of the merriest time of year. We hope that any contribution we have made lets families enjoy their holiday and allow them to look forward to a new year with more to bring," she added. (PR)



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, C/1SG David Foster, C/1LT Markeda Harris, C/LTC Keisha Manglona, C/1LT Dorothy Jebehn, and C/2LT Nicole Lizama.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

IUMC invites public to Christmas services

The Immanuel United Methodist Church is inviting everyone to its Carols & Lessons Service on Dec. 24, 2011, at 7pm, and to its Christmas Sunday Service on Dec. 25, 2011, at 10am.

Both events will be celebrated by the whole congregation at the church's location on Chalan Kanoa Street and Barbara Avenue in Chalan Kanoa.

For more information, contact Jamie J. Martinez (285-0494), Pam A. Carhill (287-

4646), or Soledad Corpuz (989-0965). (PR)

Navy, Marines set training on FDM

SANTA RITA, Guam—The U.S. Navy and Marine Corps will conduct training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla Dec. 26-30, 11pm to 1am.

The public, especially fishermen, commercial pilots and marine tour operators, are advised to stay clear from the area during the times and dates indicated.

The general location of the

training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla training area will be on a 10 nautical mile radius on all quadrants. Farallon de Medinilla plays a special and unique role in national defense because its location provides access frequency that supports established training requirements. In addition, the air and sea space in the Farallon provides sufficient room for the many different attack profiles necessary to replicate training opportunities in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

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Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

Philosopher president

Plato wrote that the ideal government would be a republic ruled by “philosopher-kings,” men raised and educated as true intellectuals and practical politicians.

Aside from perhaps Thomas Jefferson, America never found that combination in any of its presidents. Indeed, though Newt Gingrich might protest, intellectualism is a disqualifier today for at least one major party.

Vaclav Havel, the former Czech president who died Sunday at 75, always was acutely aware of his status as the world’s leading intellectual-politician. The playwright and dissident who helped usher in Czechoslovakia’s “Velvet Revolution” in 1989 spent 14 years as his nation’s first post-Soviet president, presiding reluctantly over its dissolution in 1993 into two nations.

He was neither a great playwright nor a great politician, but he was good enough at both to become one of the most profound voices for morality in politics that the world ever has known.

Mr. Havel insisted that if you believe it with your mind, you must work at it with your hands.

“When Thomas Jefferson wrote that ‘Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the Consent of the Governed,’ it was a simple and important act of the human spirit,” Mr. Havel told a joint session of the U.S. Congress in 1990.

“What gave meaning to that act, however, was the fact that the author backed it up with his life. It was not just his words, it was his deeds as well.”

It is striking in these days of zero-sum politics, in which one side wins only to the extent that the other loses, to reflect on the words of a man who wrestled with evil—he spent more than five years in and out of Soviet jails—and came out insistent that government exists for the common good.

“Our country, if that is what we want, can now permanently radiate love, understanding, the power of the spirit and of ideas,” he told his countrymen in his first inaugural address in 1990. “It is precisely this glow that we can offer as our specific contribution to international politics.”

Mr. Havel, with his constitutionally limited powers as president, advocated for what he called a “civil society.” Others in the government had a more practical view of what the nation’s post-Soviet priorities should be—cashing in and catching up on everything they’d been unable to buy behind the Iron Curtain.

Mr. Havel engaged in running debates with the economist Vaclav Klaus, who would become Czech prime minister in 1992 and is now the Czech president. The first Vaclav was a dreamer and philosopher, the other a hard-nosed conservative and free-marketer, a far more practical platform for a politician.

As Mr. Havel’s health declined, Mr. Klaus’ views became ascendant. The Czech Republic is now one of the richest nations in Europe, but Mr. Havel mourned the loss of its soul. He said in a speech in 2000:

“(W)e are also living in the first atheistic civilization, in other words, a civilization that has lost its connection with the infinite and eternity. For that reason it prefers short-term profit to long-term profit. What is important is whether an investment will provide a return in 10 or 15 years; how it will affect the lives of our descendants in a hundred years is less important.”

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Homesick for the holidays

Irving Berlin wrote “White Christmas,” one of the biggest-selling songs of all time, with tongue planted firmly in cheek. Although the wistful tune soothed homesick soldiers in such God-awful places as Guadalcanal more than half a century ago, and no doubt it still plays in Kandahar today, Berlin most likely wrote what he called “the best song that anybody’s ever written” somewhere in the sunny Southwest, probably while sitting by a swanky hotel swimming pool.

Not only was Berlin, a Russian Jewish immigrant, not thinking of some idyllic family Christmas of his youth, chances are that this anthem to homesickness was composed with more than a little acknowledgment that, nostalgia aside, writing songs poolside wasn’t so bad. No one knows for sure, but many have speculated that Berlin wrote “White Christmas” at either the Beverly Hills Hotel or the Biltmore in Phoenix.

Just listen to the opening verse Berlin deleted from the sheet music after Bing Crosby’s less ironic recording topped the Hit Parade in 1942. Unless you’re with the New Hampshire Chamber of Commerce, I doubt you’ll have much pity for the songwriter’s plight.

“The sun is shining, the grass is green,

“The orange and palm trees sway.

“There’s never been such a day in Beverly Hills, L.A.

“But it’s December the 24th

“And I’m longing to be up north.”

The all-but-lost bars point to the fact that Christmas is prime time for Americans to wrestle publicly with the conflict between our national obsession with geographic mobility and our much-vaunted love of home sweet home. This is when we allow ourselves to acknowledge the emotional and psychological costs of our rootlessness—our homesickness.

Since the late 19th century, argues Weber State University historian Susan J. Matt in her new book “Homesickness: An American History,” Americans have accepted mobility and separation as the price of progress. By the mid-20th century, mental health experts and sociologists considered homesickness a condition suffered only by children and the weak-minded.

In 1963, sociologist Robert Gutman concluded that “mobility (had) been written into the American character.” Our secret? “The ability to strike up satisfying conversations with people one has never seen before, the willingness to concede the legitimacy of a wide range of behavior patterns, the focus on the family as the primary group which must provide the principal source of satisfaction—these traits” combined to enable Americans to move from one place to another.

But come Christmas and we moan and groan about our freely made decisions to move away from home, exploiting the trappings of Christmas.

Thanksgiving is capacious and adaptable enough to allow for extended and new definitions of family—it celebrates, after all, In-

By GREGORY RODRIGUEZ
Los Angeles Times

Gregory Rodriguez is executive director of the Center for Social Cohesion at Arizona State University and a columnist for the Los Angeles Times. Readers may send him email at grodriguez@latimescolumnists.com.



dians and Pilgrims, who come together as a community. But Christmas in the U.S. is more intimate, narrow and idealized. Its core story revolves around a holy nuclear family and a personal spiritual experience. We know for certain Ebenezer Scrooge has undergone a Christmas transformation when he rejoins his own family and shores up Bob Cratchit’s.

“White Christmas” is only the most famous example of the yearning, nostalgia and homesickness that pervade American pop Christmas culture. Judy Garland’s great “Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas” gets downright morose with lyrics like “Someday soon, we all will be together / If the fates allow / Until then we’ll have to muddle through somehow.” And there’s the lost-love loneliness of Elvis Presley’s “Blue Christmas” and Dan Fogelberg’s 1980s classic “Same Old Lang Syne.”

From “Elf” to “Home Alone,” movies too are rife with tales of separation and longing on the 25th of December. Commercials (Audi this year; Folgers in years past) make “home for Christmas” a leitmotif. And let’s not forget that one of the most popular ways to spread holiday cheer, the Christmas card, is a perfect fit for a society built on mass mobility. Americans don’t move as much now as they used to, but, particularly in the West, where less than 50 percent of residents were born in the state where they reside, mobility is alive and well.

“White Christmas” and “Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas” were made popular in a time of war, when millions of young men were shipped overseas during World War II. But that doesn’t diminish their appeal to the rest of us, who do most of our moving by choice and, according to a 2008 Pew Research Center survey, for reasons having to do with “job and business opportunities.” By contrast, most who choose to remain in their hometowns cite “the tug of family ties.”

That tension between the tug of family and the allure of opportunity suggests that at some point those who move far from home determine that the benefits of relocating outweigh the costs. That doesn’t mean they never get homesick. Nor does all the nostalgic emoting at Christmas indicate that they’d seriously consider going back home. Because let’s face it, though a white Christmas might have its charms, sunshine and palm trees on the 24th of December are not too shabby either.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Morning Jesse

Jesse, too, Jesse's son, my nephew. Both derive their name from Jesus of the Greek *Iasous* of the Hebrew *Yeshua*, more properly *Yohoshua*, the son of YHWH (the tetragrammaton that literally means "I am that I am"), harkening back to Ur of Chaldea at the junction of the twin rivers of Mesopotamia.

It is to *Yeshua MiNetzeret* (Jesus of Nazareth) that we owe all this dreaming of White Christmas on reindeer Rudolf's sleigh carrying Santa Claus Joeten gifts that might be under flashing lights tonight. Or, given the state of the economy, the wrapped necessities from the 24-hour store set by the potted plant on the table!

But that is a long story.

My short version goes like this. I dreamt walking along the sea-shore when I noticed a second set of footprints, and when I furrowed my brow, a voice said: "Fear not, it is just old Jesse, the Christ of your Christmas story."

Then I noticed just a pair of footprints, and my religious neighbor thundered: "You got tired, and Jesus is carrying you on his back like a slave of yonder and yon."

I looked at my legs and saw that my feet were still grounded. Then I heard the voice of Reality again: "You are OK. You evidently heard my Jesse say a long time ago to the paraplegic by the pool that if he wanted to be well, he can pick up his bed, and walk. He did. So did you, if I recall, and not only have you learned to walk on your own, you followed my admonition that you carry your neighbor along, but to make sure s/he learns to walk on her/his own later down the road."

The voice added: "Oh, your footprints appears to be wobbly from the burden of neighbor, but I am glad to see, you learned to dance. They call me the *Lord of the Dance*, you know. But starry-eyed followers keep dumping on my shoulders singing JC Superstar songs like I was Superman, ignoring my Clark Kent message."

I suppose, that's probably why Jesse's most universally held image is that of one nailed to a cross! That religious image is in fact biology, the pupa from the caterpillar before the wonder of a butterfly, a radical and total process of transformation. Crisis, chrysalis and Christ on the Cross are not unrelated terms!

I am a simpleton, but I live in 2011, and Steve Jobs said to keep my story simple and elegant. I heard that Steve's middle name is Jesse but that's another story.

I have little empathy with the ecclesiastical accretion of imperial pomp and circumstance that stages the Christmas story. An Episcopal figure alleged earlier "that we were out to destroy the Church." Wow. "Not to worry," Gary Bradley S.J. used to say. He understood we were for Christian resurgence, not Cathedral defense! (Jaime/James wasn't Jesse/Jesus' brother for nothing!)

One warmhearted evangelical comments that Americans last year spent \$450 billion on Christmas. It only takes \$20 billion to provide fresh water for everyone on the planet, he added, and calls the expenditure Christmas blasphemy!

Piedmont parson pundit John Cock added that water is elemental to human existence and it would be a profound symbol if Americans spent the \$50 billion of it on potable water, \$300 billion blocking carbon emission from entering the atmosphere, and \$50 billion on remedial health care. That still leaves \$50 billion on gifts. Jesus shouts, "*Hallelujah!*" (praise be YHWH) to that one!

Christianity is a non-prophet organization, George Carlin quips. The U.S. prides itself as a Christian nation, with a military MQ-9 predatory drone program costing about \$12 billion. An MQ-1 unit cost \$4.5 million each; that was nine versions ago not too long before they were tested on Afghan lives. Iranians captured three earlier versions, the last one on the smart sly. We are now about to ring China with the most recent version to keep the dragon of the East at bay, in case it joins the Kims of the Korean peninsula in shooting darts at Japan. Then there is the slew of F-22 raptors that cost \$150 million apiece flying the big arch from Diego Garcia to Kamchatka making sure Mao's heirs do not fish on Korean waters, or profit from the oil fields under the South China Sea near the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei and Vietnam!

Russia took exception to the NATO missile shield since she is not assured that the Poland-based missiles meant to neutralize Iran are not pointed to both sides of the Urals.

A long goodbye to Afghanistan

This week, the last convoy of U.S. troops in Iraq drove noisily across the border into Kuwait and shut the gate behind them. The next drawdown comes in Afghanistan, where American forces are scheduled to disengage from most combat by the end of 2014.

But the Afghanistan withdrawal won't be anywhere near as final as the one we just saw. U.S. military leaders are working on a new slimmed-down strategy that would keep some American troops in combat against the Taliban for years to come, long after 2014.

The heart of the new strategy is a shift in the U.S. mission from fighting the Taliban directly to serving mainly as advisors and support forces for the new Afghan army. But some Americans would still be in the combat business, not only as frontline advisors, but also as special operation units and a quick reaction force to rescue Afghan fighters who got into trouble.

The strategy is still being debated and designed, and officials said they haven't determined how many Americans would stay behind. "I'm not predicting tens of thousands," Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, told me and other reporters who accompanied him on a visit to U.S. bases in Afghanistan last week.

When I asked another senior official whether 15,000 was a plausible figure, he nodded and said: "I like that number."

The force now numbers about 94,000; that hypothetical 15,000 would be a smaller presence than the United States has maintained in Afghanistan since 2005. But it's still likely to come as a surprise to anyone who thought President Obama's promise to draw forces down by 2014 meant a complete end to the U.S. combat role.

"Our troops will continue coming home at a steady pace as Afghan security forces move into the lead," Obama said in June, when he outlined his withdrawal timetable. "Our mission will change from combat to support. By 2014, this process of

transition will be complete, and the Afghan people will be responsible for their own security."

U.S. officials in Afghanistan have tried to stress the flip side of the message: One way or another, we're staying for a long time.

"We're not going to be done by the end of '14," the commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan, Marine Gen. John Allen, told us last week. "The message that we will be here in some form ... is a very important message for the Taliban."

If the two messages sound contradictory, that's because they reflect a continuing ambivalence at the heart of U.S. policy. Obama wants to prevent the Taliban from toppling the government in Kabul, so he ordered a surge in U.S. troops to a peak of more than 100,000 last year. But the president also wants to make sure that the surge is only temporary — and that American voters focus on the fact that the war, or at least our part of it, is winding down.

Those cross-pressures are driving the military's scramble to draw up a new strategy, even though many officers on the ground aren't convinced that the Afghans will be ready to take over on schedule.

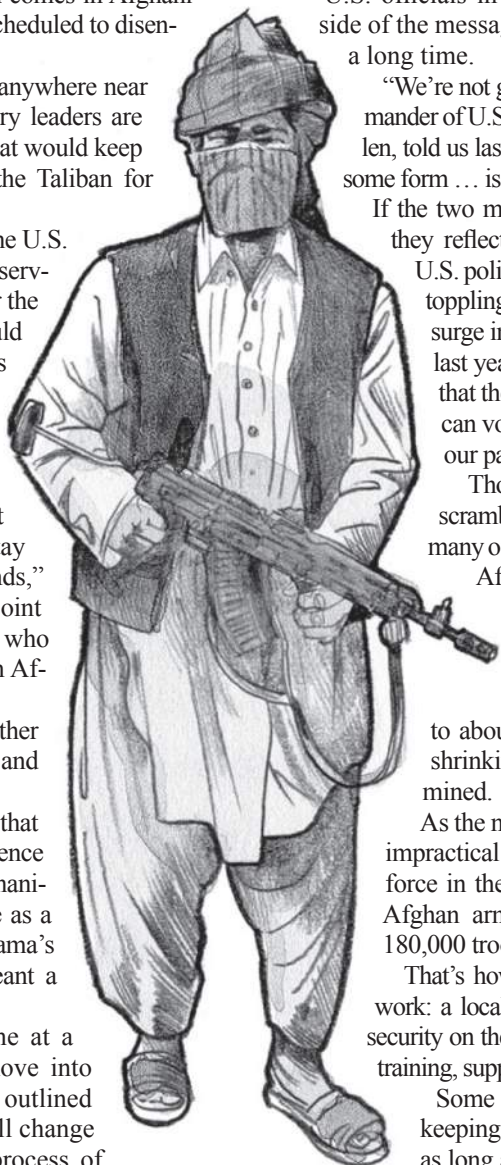
"The numbers are coming down, and we're reacting to that," an official explained.

Under the timetable Obama imposed on the surge, the U.S. force will decline to about 68,000 by next September and continue shrinking after that at a pace that's still undetermined.

As the numbers come down, it will quickly become impractical to rely on U.S. units as the main combat force in the war. The burden will have to shift to the Afghan armed forces, which already number about 180,000 troops and hope to grow to 240,000 by 2014.

That's how counterinsurgency warfare is supposed to work: a local government's forces take responsibility for security on the ground, even if they need foreign help with training, supplies, transportation and air support.

Some officers, including Allen, have argued for keeping as many U.S. combat troops in the field as long as possible — pointing to their success this



By **JAIME VERGARA**

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jaime R. Vergara (jrvergarajr2031@aol.com) is a former PSS teacher and is currently writing from the campus of Shenyang Aerospace University in China.



The American Ho! Ho! Ho! is a bit expensive but we might have enough in the health, veterans, education and elderly budget to cut from, so "Fear not, even Thou, the privileged 1 percent filthy rich, who find the U.S. a friendly tax haven!"

Is venom dripping from our lips? Must be the same frothing in the mouth of children of the rest of the world who mount their computer consoles playing Sentinel in their DOTA (Defense of the Ancients) game ferociously against the Scourge, the enemy imagined as Americans!

End of my story: Chinese *Ye Su* comes along and says, "this is the day we have; you can dance this day or whine it away, this is the day we have." America's cleavage of 1 versus 99 percent is one of the OWS realities that Jesse of Hawaii has to live with, and with him, we *hula*, nevertheless, in glorious celebration this Christmas morn. With Pete Seeger and Enya, we sing Robert Lowry's lines:

... what tho' the tempest loudly roars,

I hear the truth it liveth.

And tho' the darkness round me close,

Songs in the night it giveth.

No storm can shake my inmost calm

While to the rock I'm clinging;

Since love is lord of heaven and earth

How can I keep from singing? ...

We have the older Jesse to thank for Christmas morn. It is still morning in the world.

By **DOYLE MCMANUS**

Los Angeles Times

Doyle McManus is a columnist for The Los Angeles Times. Readers may send him email at doyle.mcmanus@latimes.com.



year in quelling the Taliban in southern Afghanistan and to continued heavy fighting in the eastern provinces.

But others argue that moving slowly risks not getting there at all. As long as American units are doing the fighting, they argue, the Afghans won't get a chance to take the lead role as soon as they should.

When a U.S. officer leads American and Afghan forces into battle now, "he focuses on the success of his own (American) unit," said one official. "If you're an advisor, you have to focus on the success of the Afghan unit."

Under the new strategy, U.S. advisors would probably be attached to Afghan combat units in teams of 12 to 16, officials said. They would help the Afghans plan operations, provide them with U.S. military intelligence and call on U.S. backup forces when needed.

The new strategy doesn't promise any kind of quick victory. Instead, it promises mostly to give the Afghan army a chance to fight a long, slow war to convince the Taliban that they can't win.

And even if the Afghan military performs well, the country faces problems that aren't being solved: a government riddled with inefficiency and corruption, and the Taliban's use of Pakistan as a shelter from which to fight.

Still, the new strategy makes a virtue of necessity: The numbers are coming down, and this is the best we can do with what we are willing to commit. It recognizes our impatience. Counterinsurgencies can take decades to fight; Americans dislike any costly war that's longer than one presidential term.






Hawks won't like it, because it reduces U.S. firepower in the war. Doves won't like it, because it isn't a definitive end to the U.S. military presence.

But it's a coherent strategy and could even turn out to be a realistic one. Those aren't bad benchmarks in a 10-year-old war that has seen its share of failure.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
				
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲ 87° ▼ 76°	▲ 87° ▼ 76°	▲ 87° ▼ 76°	▲ 87° ▼ 76°	▲ 87° ▼ 76°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	▲ 85 ▼ 78
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲ 86 ▼ 77
Yap	Showers	▲ 87 ▼ 78
Chuuk	Showers	▲ 85 ▼ 80
Pohnpei	Showers	▲ 84 ▼ 78
Kosrae	Showers	▲ 84 ▼ 78
Majuro	Showers	▲ 85 ▼ 80

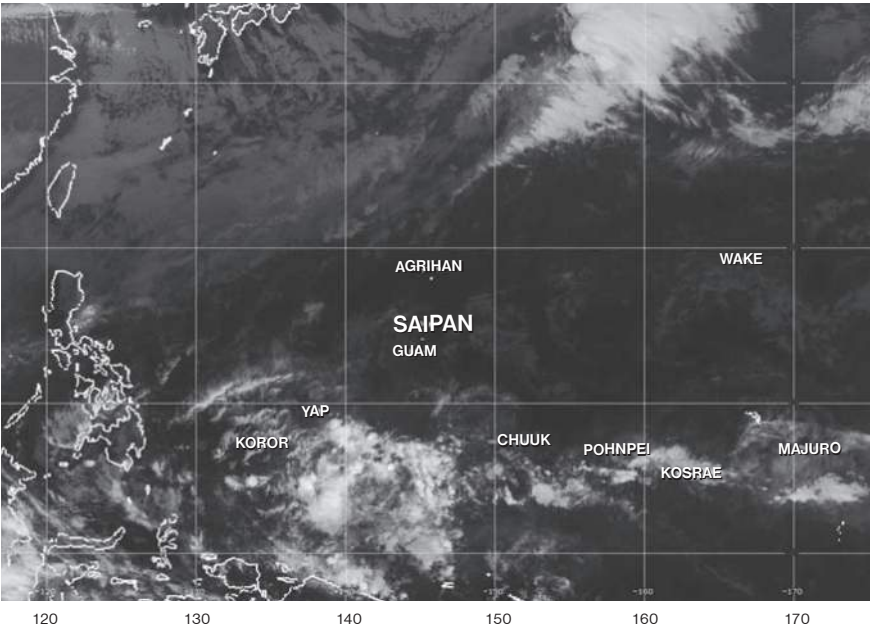
Around The Globe

Auckland	Showers	▲ 69 ▼ 59
Beijing	Sunny	▲ 40 ▼ 18
Hong Kong	Sunny	▲ 62 ▼ 53
Honolulu	Sunny	▲ 80 ▼ 72
London	Mostly Sunny	▲ 46 ▼ 39
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲ 68 ▼ 42
Manila	Thundershowers	▲ 82 ▼ 75
Melbourne	Thundershowers	▲ 79 ▼ 63
Miami	Partly Cloudy	▲ 81 ▼ 71
New York	Partly Cloudy	▲ 41 ▼ 31
Osaka	Showers	▲ 45 ▼ 38
Paris	Mostly Sunny	▲ 44 ▼ 37
Pusan	Sunny	▲ 39 ▼ 26
Rome	Showers	▲ 60 ▼ 40
Salem	Partly Cloudy	▲ 51 ▼ 37
San Francisco	Sunny	▲ 61 ▼ 43
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	▲ 29 ▼ 18
Tokyo	Sunny	▲ 48 ▼ 33
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	▲ 48 ▼ 37

Tides

Saipan Harbor			
1:00 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.7 Feet
8:11 AM	Today	High Tide:	2.0 Feet
1:19 PM	Today	Low Tide:	1.3 Feet
6:13 PM	Today	High Tide:	2.1 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 23, 2011
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front curves southwestward from west of Minami Tori Shima at 25N150E to beyond 130E at 17N. Cloudiness and scattered showers are occurring along and north of this boundary to beyond 25N. A near-equatorial trough extends southeastward from 4N130E through a weak circulation centered at 2N140E to end at EQ143E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are found south of Koror and Yap or south of a line from 5N134E to 6N138E to 9N139E to 7N147E. Trade-wind convergence is producing scattered showers and a few thunderstorms south of Chuuk and over Pohnpei, Kosrae and Butaritari atoll within 150 miles of a line from 4N152E to 6N160E to 3N180.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:39 AM	5:53 PM
Sunday	6:40 AM	5:54 PM
Monday	6:40 AM	5:54 PM
Tuesday	6:41 AM	5:55 PM
Wednesday	6:41 AM	5:55 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	5:49 AM	5:24 PM
Sunday	6:48 AM	6:26 PM
Monday	7:43 AM	7:26 PM
Tuesday	8:32 AM	8:23 PM
Tuesday	9:17 AM	9:16 PM

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 6, 2011

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)				ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)			
C05062	2:10am	2:40am	1, 5	C05064	5:15am	5:45am	1, 5
SAIPAN (SPN)-ROTA (ROP)				ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN (SPN)			
C05064	4:15am	4:50am	1, 5	C05062	3:10am	3:45am	1, 5
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
C05070	4:15am	5:45am	1, 5 via ROP	C05062	2:10am	3:45am	1, 5 via ROP
C05070	4:35am	5:25am	2, 3, 4, 6, 7	C05069	2:45am	3:35am	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
C05068	8:25am	9:15am	Daily	C05071	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
C05074	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7	C05073	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05076	3:10pm	4:00pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7	C05075	1:40pm	2:30pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C05078	6:50pm	7:40pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7	C05077	5:30pm	6:20pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05078	7:00pm	7:50pm	3, 6	C05077	5:40pm	6:30pm	3, 6
C05072	9:55pm	10:45pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7	C05079	8:35pm	9:25pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05072	10:05pm	10:55pm	3, 6	C05079	8:45pm	9:35pm	3, 6
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
DL287	6:00am	8:35am	Daily	DL298	10:25am	3:00pm	Daily
DL297	4:35pm	7:20pm	Daily	DL288	8:40pm	1:15am+1	Daily
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)				SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
OZ606	2:10am	6:00am	1	OZ603	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	OZ605	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ604	3:20pm	7:10pm	Daily	OZ605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)				BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
OZ608	3:35am	7:05am	4, 7	OZ607	9:00pm	2:20am+1	3, 6
SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)				GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN			
3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6	3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)				SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN			
3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7	3U8647	10:40pm	5:00am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
OZ606/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN	OZ704/603	12:10am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ606/701	2:40am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	DL172/288	8:00am	1:15am+1	Daily via NRT
C05070/191	4:35am	9:45am	3, 6 via GUM	C0190/5077	10:55am	6:30pm	3, 6 via GUM
DL287/173	6:00am	10:25pm	Daily via NRT	C0190/5079	10:55am	9:35pm	3, 6 via GUM
C05068/183	8:25am	9:25pm	2, 5 via GUM	OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
C05068/183	8:25am	9:40pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM	OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
C05076/183	3:10pm	9:25pm	2, 5 via GUM	PR110/C05071	10:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 5, 7 via GUM
C05076/183	3:10pm	9:40pm	1, 4, 7 via GUM	C0192/5071	10:25pm	7:50am+1	2, 5 via GUM-Palau
C05076/193	3:10pm	11:00pm	2, 5 via GUM-Palau	C0184/5071	11:10pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:00pm	Daily via ICN	C0184/5071	11:59pm	7:50am+1	2, 5 via GUM
C05072/PR111	9:55pm	7:50am+1	1, 5, 7 via GUM				
C05072/PR111	10:05pm	7:50am+1	3, 6 via GUM				
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)				HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
OZ606/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN	OZ724/603	12:30am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ606/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ750/603	1:10am	2:20pm	1, 2, 4, 6 via ICN
C05076/179	3:10pm	10:25pm	1, 5 via GUM	OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ604/723	3:20pm	10:30pm	Daily via ICN	OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ604/749	3:20pm	11:00pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN	C0180/5071	11:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 5 via GUM
LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 5K: FlyGuam; 3U: Sichuan Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana				ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The <i>Saipan Tribune</i> is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)			

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily	FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily	FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
Guam-Rota				FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily	FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan							
FRE 1750	17:50	18:20	Daily	Tinian-Saipan			
Saipan-Rota				FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily	FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
Saipan-Rota	10:20	10:45	Daily	FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily	FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily	FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily	FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily	FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily	FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily	FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily	FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily				



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Maharlika

IT&E donates \$1K for PH typhoon victims

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

IT&E, the CNMI's number one wireless provider, expressed its support to the Filipino community by making a donation to a fundraising drive to benefit those who were affected by Typhoon Sendong in Cagayan de Oro and Iligan cities in Mindanao.

Norman Del Rosario, IT&E art director, presented the \$1,000 check donation to the United Filipino Organization at their booth at the Garapan Street Market on Thursday.

"The Filipino community has played such a huge role in the development of our islands and this is just one way that we can help the community back home recover from the devastation wrought by the typhoon," said Del Rosario.

Del Rosario recounted that the IT&E management was already planning on how to provide aid for the survivors of the typhoon—touted as one of the worst disasters to hit northern Mindanao.

"So when we heard of the relief drive spearheaded by the United Filipino Organization for Typhoon Sendong victims, IT&E thought that it was very timely and we decided to step up to the plate and donate to the cause," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Del Rosario believes that it is par-



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

IT&E art director Norman Del Rosario hands the \$1,000 check donation to United Filipino Organization president Bong Malasarte at the Garapan Street Market on Thursday. The donation is in support of UFO's fundraising drive for the victims of the Typhoon Sendong calamity that hit Cagayan de Oro and Iligan Cities in Mindanao.

ticularly essential to help the calamity survivors given that the unfortunate incident happened just days before Christmas.

UFO president Bong Malasarte, who accepted the check donation on behalf of the umbrella organization of some 30 Filipino groups, said in a

separate interview that he appreciates IT&E's positive response to their relief drive.

"IT&E has always been a supporter

our programs and activities of UFO," said Malasarte. "We were very pleased that we have their support in providing assistance to our *kababayans* in Mindanao."

Malasarte is optimistic that IT&E's donation will encourage other groups and individuals to share whatever amount they can to somehow bring back the holiday spirit to the disaster victims.

He said their fundraising efforts, which began on Dec. 22, has so far collected some \$1,700 from members of the Filipino community and the general public.

Those who want to donate can go to the Sabalu Market in Susupe today, Dec. 24, from 8am to noon and at the Filcom Pavilion in Susupe on Christmas Day, Dec. 25, from 8am to 4pm.

Malasarte disclosed that they are coordinating with the Philippine Consulate General office so they can endorse whatever amount they collect to the proper authorities. He said they have been trying to coordinate with the Philippine Red Cross but have yet to hear from them.

"I hope the Filipinos in the CNMI would find it in their hearts to share whatever amount they can to the victims. Let us all help the people of Cagayan de Oro and Iligan cities in this season of giving," Malasarte.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Members of the Lions Club International District 204 Region 2—composed of Saipan Fil-Am Lions Club, Saipan Marianas Lions Club, and Saipan Unity Lions Club—present some 60 toys to the Children's Developmental Assistance Center on Dec. 22.

Lions Club donates toys for CDAC kids

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Members of the Lions Club International District 204 Region 2 spread Christmas joy for those at the Children's Developmental Assistance Center last Dec. 22, bringing them toys to cheer them up this holiday season.

Region 2 zone chair Ladyvir Canape said that officers and members of the Saipan Unity Lions Club, Saipan Marianas Lions Club, and Saipan Fil-Am Lions Club presented some 60 toys to the CDAC staff.

Canape said Thursday's donation was Region 2's efforts to revive a Christmas project of Saipan Fil-Am Lions Club that was halted for about three years due to membership and budget woes.

"We decided that for this year, we

would engage the other Lions Clubs so we can bring back this worthwhile project," she told *Saipan Tribune*.

Canape described the experience as rewarding. "To be given the opportunity to share our blessings with children with disabilities, it's a very different feeling."

While the presentation of toys did not involve the children at CDAC for their own protection, Canape received assurance that the center will do its best to hold a Christmas party for the children in next year's donation.

"My wish for these kids is for them to have good health and to continue giving joy to their own families. Let us be thankful that we are still fortunate not to go through the same hardships like the victims of natural disasters and wars. I wish the children and their families a joyous and safe Christmas," said Canape.

Paskong Pinoy 2011 premieres at the Paseo

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Filipino community on Saipan enjoyed a meaningful, albeit sparse, Christmas celebration when the United Filipino Organization hosted *Paskong Pinoy* 2011 at the Paseo de Marianas on Dec. 17.

Filipinos young and old managed to take part in the annual festivities meant to bring together those away from home in hopes to lessen their longing and melancholy this holiday season.

In his remarks, UFO president Bong Malasarte said Christmas is an occasion that Filipinos celebrate with families, friends, even neighbors dropping by to wish them "life's very best."

Malasarte acknowledged the uncertainties and challenges faced not just by Filipinos but the island community in general.

"Let me assure you, the future seems more certain and brighter as we approach it with hope, prayers, and perseverance," he said.

Malasarte expressed hope that the UFO will rise up to the challenges ahead, with members sharing goodwill and respect for one another as it remains focused on its goals as an organization.

Last Saturday's crowd was entertained by various presentations of both individual and group performers. An array of vendors provided culinary treats and other merchandise.

Different competitions also provided amusement. For the individual singing contest for children, Leonard



CLARISSA V. DAVID

From left, Paskong Pinoy 2011 host Ulysses Sabuco, Marilou Malasarte, United Filipino Organization president Bong Malasarte, adviser and event committee co-chair Olive Yana, contest judge Andrea Sablan, event committee co-chair Minda Castro, and member Anna S. De Guzman pose for a group photo before the start of Paskong Pinoy 2011 event last Dec. 17.

Manuel Alla won first place, Lizelle Salanga bagged second place, while Lawrence Tubiera was third place. Donnel Isip and the Umang Glee Club were hailed winners for the individual singing contest for adults and the choral singing, respectively.

For the lantern making contest, the winners were Mercy Rollon, third place; Roselyn Bastareche, second place; and the Saipan Building and Fixing Computer Users Group won first place for the second consecutive year.

Group founder Mar Masilungan said it took them about five nights to create their winning lantern made of old tarpaulin, window blinds, and CDs glued together using rugby.

"It was a group effort. It wasn't just

the contributions of one individual but all those who were involved. That's the important thing," Masilungan told *Saipan Tribune*, adding that the lantern was once again donated to the Kristo Rai Church.

Judges and tabulator for the various competitions were Andrea Sablan, Dr. Esther Kanayjorn, Lucy Palacios, Mario Mayuga, and Hazel Mendoza. Annamae Adaza and Ulysses Sabuco served as program hosts.

Event committee co-chair Olive Yana said the success of this year's *Paskong Pinoy* was made possible not just by UFO officers and members but also the many volunteers and all Filipinos who participated in the celebration.

Among OFWs, Christmastime brings up memories of home

By **CLARISSA V. DAVID**
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Filipinos in the CNMI are yearning to experience once more what it's like to celebrate Christmas in the Philippines, by far the longest and arguably the best observance of this holiday throughout the globe.

As early as September, Filipinos start getting into the holiday spirit, with the singing of Christmas carols, the display of bright and colorful decorations, the mouthwatering delicacies, and just the festive atmosphere that lightens anyone's mood.

Maintenance worker Jessie Eque, who has been on island for 22 years, said that Christmas in the Philippines is always spent with families and friends, doing things like *timbang gabi*, eating *puto bumbong* and *bibingka*, as well as holiday shopping.

"I'm lucky that I'm here on Saipan with my parents, my wife and two kids. But usually, people here on island spend it at the beach drinking. I long for that celebration just like in the Philippines," said Eque, 43.

The immigration issue, Eque noted, has made Christmas celebration on the islands this year a little bit more lonesome.

"I hope Filipinos in the CNMI keep their faith, that blessings will still come our way no matter what. After all, Christmas is for everyone. It's a time to share and a time to love," he said.

Remy Oca of the Philippine

Overseas Labor Office said what she misses about Christmas back home are the children singing carols to the accompaniment of handmade instruments, expecting spare coins in return for their mangled song numbers. Colorful lanterns that line up major thoroughfares and deafening firecrackers are also a thing of beauty, she said.

"But what I miss most is the time I spend with my family. That's priceless," said Oca, who finds herself reading books as a way to spend Christmas for two years now.

Abdul T. De Jesus, a new client at the Aging Center, recounted how he would bring food home from the restaurant where he used to work, just to make his eight children happy at Christmas time. They would hear Mass as a family to commemorate the true reason for the season, he said.

"The Philippines is such a happy place to be during Christmas," said De Jesus, 81. "Nothing beats that heartwarming feeling. But I do find myself lucky to be spending holidays here on Saipan with some of my children and grandchildren."

Consul General Medardo Macaraig said that having a Filipino community in the Commonwealth helps ease the melancholy that almost always

comes with the holidays, with may so far from their families.

"With the difficulties we're facing, it is time to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas, which is contained in the teachings of the Christian religion.

Let's hope and pray that next year will bring us more blessings," said Macaraig.

Philippine Foreign Affairs Secretary Albert Del Rosario acknowledged the "extraordinary challenges" that came but reminded Filipinos that Christ's birth allows them to remember the message of love and hope and the lessons in faith and courage that it brings.

Del Rosario, who wished for peace and prosperity for Filipinos around the world, added, "May the spirit of Christmas further unite our nation and may our collective faith as a people usher in a brighter future."

Philippine Ambassador to the United States Jose L. Cuisia Jr. urged Filipinos in the U.S. to remain committed to helping their home country in the coming years.

"The strength of our country depends on all of us, Filipinos in every corner of the world," said Cuisia. "We have made great strides but many challenges remain. I ask you to stay the course and let us continue working together for the future of our nation."



Macaraig

UN: Philippine flood destruction like tsunami

By **BULLIT MARQUEZ**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

ILIGAN, Philippines (AP)—A southern Philippine area devastated by flash floods that killed more than 1,000 people looks like it was hit by a tsunami, a U.N. official said Thursday as he appealed for \$28 million in aid for the region.

U.N. humanitarian coordinator Soe Nyunt-U voiced concern about possible outbreaks of disease among the thousands living in evacuation centers after their houses were washed away last Friday when a tropical storm unleashed the flash floods.

"It was as if the cities were hit by an inland tsunami," Nyunt-U told reporters in Manila. "Entire areas were completely flattened."

Aid workers were rushing in relief supplies, but a lack of running water was a major concern.

"We must improve this situ-

ation at the soonest possible time to avoid disease outbreaks that will further compound the hardships of the people already weakened by hunger and grief from loss of family and friends," Nyunt-U said.

He mentioned a cholera type virus that may occur due to problems stemming from congestion in the evacuation centers, where poor sanitation and hygiene posed a health risk.

Such concerns were nagging Annaliza Tumanda, who was caring for her baby daughter, Aizee, born at the height of the storm and floods that destroyed their home in Cagayan de Oro. They were at a government-run shelter in the same city.

Tumanda said she, her husband and three children—aged 3 to 8—swam to a neighbor's three-story house. She went into labor Saturday morning and was brought by rescuers to the roof of a health center, where

she gave birth to a healthy 6.6-pound (3-kilogram) baby.

"With God's will, we survived," she said. "It was like a miracle."

In all, 640,000 people have been affected by the disaster, the government and the U.N. said.

"Debris from houses, buildings and other structures that had been destroyed by the storm was all swept out to the sea, leaving huge areas devoid of all traces of habitation," Nyunt-U said.

Nyunt-U said he was hopeful donors and foreign governments would respond to the appeal despite the global economic crisis. An appeal launched following a 2009 typhoon that killed about 500 people in Manila collected only half the funds needed.

"It's the Christmas season and the willingness of the international community is high," he said, adding that "no country can stand alone."

They're back: Filipino stewardesses dance again

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Who says plane travel can't be fun?

Flight attendants for a low-cost Philippine airline who gained fame by dancing through safety demonstrations are back swaying through the aisles.

They've swapped the Lady

Gaga tunes that made them popular last year for Mariah Carey's "All I Want for Christmas Is You."

Manila-based Cebu Pacific airline says the choreographed dance helps passengers pay more attention to the safety demonstration.

Said spokeswoman Candice

Iyog on Thursday, "Now that it's Christmas, we wanted to bring a little more fun into the flight."

Iyog told The Associated Press that reaction has been good.

Video of the routine shows four attendants in orange shirts and khaki shorts dancing away on select flights.

Commonwealth I Sankattan Siha Na Islas Mariana Ofisinan I Gubietno Dipattamenton I Tano' Pupbliku

NOTICE OF PROPOSED LEASE OF PUBLIC LAND

In accordance with Section 106 (b) of Public Law 15-2, the Department of Public Lands hereby gives notice of its intent to lease certain public lands in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Any interested parties of the general public may submit comments, data, views, or arguments of alternative proposals for the lease of the public land. As further provided by Public Law 15-2, the following pertinent information is required to be published.

- The proposed lease of public land is described as Lot No. 047 L 02, containing an area of approximately 49,000 square meters, more or less, situated in Naftan, Saipan. A copy of the location of the parcel is available at the Department of Public Lands for inspection.
- The prospective lessee is Eco Island Development, LLC. The Members of the Limited Liability Company are Mr. Herman P. Sablan and Ms. Shen Yen.
- The proposed lease was negotiated by Mr. Herman P. Sablan.
- The lessee shall use the premises solely for the purpose of developing and managing a solar photovoltaic power plant.

The term of the proposed lease agreement is 25 years, with an option to extend the lease for an additional 15 years.

The proposed annual rental during the term is based on a percentage of the appraised fair market value of the property.
- A copy of the proposed lease agreement may be obtained at the office of the Department of Public Lands, located on the 2nd floor of the Joeten Dandan Commercial Building in Dandan, Saipan; Songsong Village, Rota; or the 1st floor of the Kings Commercial Building, Tinian.
- The Department of Public Lands has received no alternative proposals to lease the subject public land in Naftan, Saipan.
- The Secretary of the Department of Public Lands shall accept written comments, views, arguments or alternative proposals from interested parties on or before January 5, 2012 at the Department of Public Lands offices located in Saipan, Rota or Tinian.

NUTISIA PUT MAPROPONIN INEKSTENDIN INATKILON TANU' PUPBLIKU

Sigun gi Seksiona 106(b) gi Lain Pupbliku 15-2, i Dipattamentun Tānu' Pupbliku guini ha nā'i nutisia ni intensiō-ña para u mana'ma'atila pumalu na tānu' pupbliku siha giya Saipan, Commonwealth gi Sangkattan na Islas Marianas siha. Maseha hāyi na pattida siha gi halum i pupbliku henerāt siha na na'hālum i imfotmasion, opiñon, pat testamoñun kinentra siha gi tinahguin propositu siha ni para i atkilon tānu' pupbliku. Sigi mās mo'na mapribeniya ginin i Lain Pupbliku 15-2, i tinattitiyi pettanesis imfotmasion ni madimānda ni debi na u mapupblika.

- I maproponi na atkilon tānu' pupbliku ha diskribi kumu Lot No. Lot No. 047 L 02, ni kinonsisti āria kāsī guaha 49,000 square meters, mās pat menus, ni gaigi giya Naftan, Saipan. I kopian i lugāt gaigi gi pumalu na gumuaha gi Dipattamentun Tānu' Pupbliku siha ni para i rikunosimientu.
- I manatikila i Eco Island Development, LCC. I miembru siha gi Liability Company si Siñot Herman P. Sablan yan si Siñora Shen Yen.
- I maproponi na atkilon manigosiya gi as Siñot Herman P. Sablan.
- I manatikila debi na u kuntuha umusa i lugāt siha uniku para i hinangai adilāntu yan minanehan solar photovoltaic power plant.

I teman i maproponi na kuntrātan atkilon sa' 25 āñus, yan option para u ma'ekstendi i atkilon gi ta'lu 15 āñus.

I maproponi na āpas atkilon gi sakkan gi durāntin i tema sigun gi percentage gi appraised fair market value gi propiedāt.
- Kopian i manmaproponi na kontrātan atkilon siha machuli' gi ufisinan i Dipattamentun Tānu' Pupbliku siha, gaigi gi sigundu bibienda 2nd floor gi Joeten Dandan Commercial Building giya Dandan, Saipan; gi Songsong Village, Luta; pat i primet 1st bibienda gi Kings Commercial Building, Tinian.
- I Dipattamentun Tanu' Pupbliku siha tāya' na ha risibi tinahguin propositu siha para sinuhetun atkilon tanu' pupbliku siha giya Naftan, Saipan.
- I Sekritāriun i Dipattamentun Tanu' Pupbliku siha debi na u aksepta i tinigi' i imfotmasion, opiñon yan testamoñun kinentra pat tinahguin propositu siha ginin i manggai interes na pattida siha gi pat āntis di Ineru (January) 5, 2012 gi ufisinan Dipattamentun Tānu' Pupbliku siha ni gaigi Saipan, Luta, pat Tinian.

ARONGORONG REEL POMWOL AKKILONUL FALÚWEER TOULAP

Sángi Tálil ye 106(b) mellól Alléghul Toulap 15-2, Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap, ekki atotoowow ammataf igba ebwe akkilaaló eghús falúw mellól Seipel, Commonwealth Téel Falúwasch Marianas. Schóókka remuschál emwal rebwe isisilong yaar mángemáng, data awewee, me angingi reel pomwol akkilonul falúweer toulap. Sengi Alléghul Toulap ye 15-2, ebwal ayoora, lamal awewee kka rebwe mweiti ngáli milikka ebwe akkatééló.

- Pomwol akkilonul falúweer toulap nge ekki bwáari Lot No. 047 L 02 ebwe yoor faaigh me tiwoow saangaras lapal (49,000 square meters) elapeló me ngäre eghús, elo Naftan, Seipel. Tilighial bwuley yeel nge eyoor mereel Bwulasiyool Falúweer Toulap (Public Lands) ngäre óbwe ghuley fischiy.
- Schéschéél schóól akkilon nge Eco Islands Development, LLC. Membrol Limited Liability Company yeel nge Mr. Herman P. Sablan me Ms. Shen Yen.
- Schóól awewee akkilon yel nge Mr. Herman P. Sablan.
- Schóól akkilon ebwe yáayá falúw yeel rel ebwe ayoora me mwóghutagheli solar photovoltaic power plant.

Tool aighúghúl pomwol akkilon nge reweigh me limoow ráagh (25 years). Emmwel rebwe bwal sóóbwey ngáli seigh me limoow ráagh (15 years).

Pomwol méél akkilon lól ráagh kka re akkili nge ebwe mwiril sáangi percentage il yaal appraised fair market value il falúw.

Tilighial akkilon yeel nge emmwel óbwe bwughi merel bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap, elo aruwowal pwó (2nd floor) me Joeten Dandan Commercial Building llól Tuturam, Seipél; Songsong village, Luuta; me ngäre mmwal pwó (1st floor) mellól Kings Commercial Building, Tchúlúyól.

- Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap nge esáal bweibwogh mwo pomwol akkilon ye elo Naftan, Seipél.
- Samwoolul Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap nge ebwe bwughi ischil mángemáng, aingingil merel amweyút mmwal Eneero (January) 5, 2012 mellól Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap iye elo Seipél, Luuta, Tchúlúyól.

Samu't Sari



DECORATING CONTEST WINNERS

Students of San Antonio Elementary School accept the \$5,000 check after winning the 6th Christmas Tree Decoration Contest at the Paseo de Marianas last Dec. 15.

CLARISSA V. DAVID



Teachers and parents of Green Meadow School pose by their second prize-winning Christmas tree and \$3,000 check on Dec. 15.

CLARISSA V. DAVID



CHRISTMAS CHEER

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Tinian Jr. Sr. High School National Honor Society, along with their adviser, Liz Hofschneider, serenaded the Tinian Manamko' Center with Christmas songs on Tuesday, Dec. 21.



BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

Happy Birthday to Jessica Roligat Limes(Dec. 24)! May d good Lord Bless U on dis special day! Cheers! Much love from KaiLin & Laluso Gangs



SEASON'S GREETINGS

Above, Saipan Seniors Advisory Council officers and other clients at the Aging Center show some of the cards presented to them by students of San Vicente Elementary School Tuesday morning.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

GLEE CLUB

Right, members of the Marianas High School Glee Club perform holiday songs for members of State Board of Education during a break in Thursday's meeting.

MONETH G. DEPOSA



'SIMBANG GABI'

Labor representative Carmelina Velasquez, center, is flanked by officers and members of the Filipino community during the start of Simbang Gabi on early Dec. 16.

CLARISSA V. DAVID



SERENADING THE MAN'AMKO

Twelve members of the Proa Music Society of the Northern Marianas Club sing Christmas carols to the man'amko at the Aging Center Wednesday morning.

CLARISSA V. DAVID



Business

Payroll tax deadlock ends as House caves

WASHINGTON (AP)—House Republicans on Thursday caved to demands by President Barack Obama, congressional Democrats and fellow Republicans for a short-term renewal of payroll tax cuts for all workers. The breakthrough almost certainly spares workers an average \$20 a week tax increase Jan. 1.

After days of wrangling that even Speaker John Boehner acknowledged “may not have been politically the smartest thing in the world,” the Ohio Republican abruptly changed course and dropped demands for immediate holiday season talks with the Senate on a full-year measure that all

sides said they want.

The House and Senate plan to act on the two-month extension Friday.

House Republicans were under fire from their constituents and GOP establishment figures incensed that they would risk losing the tax cut issue to Democrats at the dawn of the 2012 presidential and congressional election year.

“In the end House Republicans felt like they were reenacting the Alamo, with no reinforcements and our friends shooting at us,” said Rep. Kevin Brady, R-Texas.

Boehner said he expects both House and Senate to pass a new

bill by Christmas that would renew the tax break while congressional negotiators work out a one-year measure that would also extend jobless benefits for millions of Americans and prevent doctors from absorbing a big cut in Medicare payments.

The developments were a clear win for Obama. The payroll tax cut was the centerpiece of his three-month campaign-style drive for jobs legislation that seems to have contributed to an uptick in his poll numbers.

“Because of this agreement, every working American will keep his or her tax cut—about \$1,000 for the average family,” Obama said in a statement.

“That’s about \$40 in every paycheck. And when Congress returns, I urge them to keep working to reach an agreement that will extend this tax cut and unemployment insurance for all of 2012 without drama or delay.”

If the cuts had expired as scheduled, 160 million workers would have seen a 2 percentage point increase in their Social Security taxes. And up to 2 million people without jobs for six months would start losing unemployment benefits averaging \$300 a week.

The GOP retreat ends a tense standoff in which Boehner’s House Republicans came under great pressure to agree to the

short-term extension passed by the Senate on Saturday. The speaker was initially open to the idea, but rank and file Republicans revolted and the House instead insisted on immediate talks.

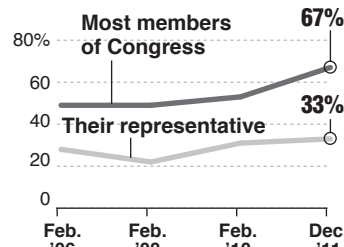
The conflict arose after the Senate, on a bipartisan vote, passed legislation last week to extend for two months the payroll tax cut, jobless benefits and doctors’ Medicare fees that otherwise would have been cut 27 percent. The House had just days before passed a full-year extension that included a series of conservative policy prescriptions unpalatable to Obama and congressional Democrats.

Public irked by taxcut battle

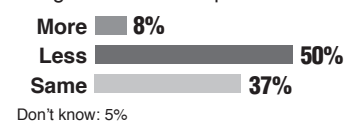
The partisan battle over extending the Social Security payroll tax cut may have hurt Republicans and given President Barack Obama a boost; what the polls say:

Voter frustration with Congress

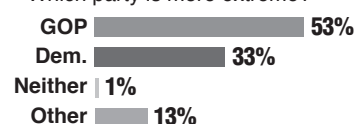
• Percent who don’t want to see reelected ...



• Compared to others, this Congress has accomplished:

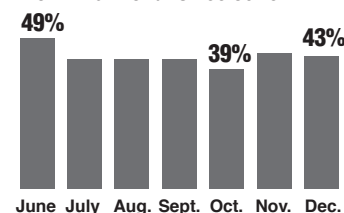


• Which party is more extreme?



Obama job approval inches up

From mid-month since June



Source: Gallup daily poll of 1,500 adults on Obama's job approval (three-day rolling average); margin of error: +/-3 percentage points; Pew Research Center poll of 1,521 adults, Dec. 7-11, 2011; margin of error: +/-3.5 percentage points
Graphic: Judy Treible © 2011 MCT

Wal-Mart pulls formula after baby dies in Missouri

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP)—Wal-Mart and health officials awaited tests Thursday on a batch of powdered infant formula that was removed from more than 3,000 stores nationwide after a Missouri newborn who consumed it apparently died from a rare infection.

The source of the bacteria that caused the infection has not been determined, but it occurs naturally in the environment and in plants such as wheat and rice. The most worrisome appearances have been in dried milk and powdered formula, which is why manufacturers routinely test for the germs.

Wal-Mart pulled the Enfamil Newborn formula from shelves as a precaution following the death of little Avery Cornett in the southern Missouri town of Lebanon.

The formula has not been recalled, and the manufacturer said tests showed the batch was negative for the bacteria before it was shipped. Additional tests

were under way.

“We decided it was best to remove the product until we learn more,” Wal-Mart spokeswoman Dianna Gee said. “It could be returned to the shelves.”

Customers who bought formula in 12.5-ounce cans with the lot number ZP1K7G have the option of returning them for a refund or exchange, Gee said.

The product is not exclusive to Wal-Mart. The manufacturer, Mead Johnson Nutrition, declined to answer questions about whether formula from that batch was distributed to other stores. “We’re highly confident in the safety and quality of our products,” said Christopher Perille, a spokesman for the company based in the Chicago suburb of Glenview.

A second infant fell ill late last month after consuming several different types of powdered baby formula, but that child recovered, health officials said.

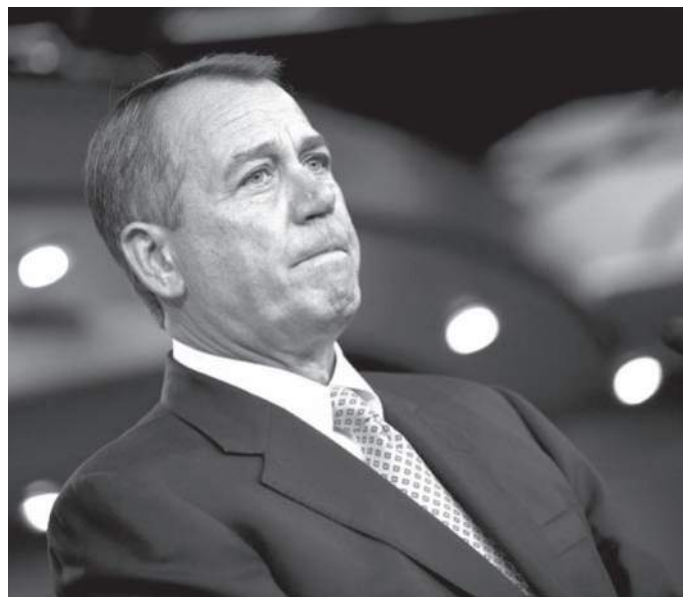
Powdered infant formula is

not sterile, and experts have said there are not adequate methods to completely remove or kill all bacteria that might creep into formula before or during production.

Preliminary hospital tests indicated that Avery died of a rare infection caused by bacteria known as Cronobacter sakazakii. The infection can be treated with antibiotics, but it’s deemed extremely dangerous to babies less than 1 month old and those born premature.

The bacteria are “pervasive in the environment,” Perille said. “There’s a whole range of potential sources on how this infection may have got started.”

A spokeswoman for the Food and Drug Administration said the agency is investigating the death, along with the Centers for Disease Control and the Missouri Department of Health. Investigators have collected samples from the family and are testing unopened formula purchased at stores.



Speaker of the House John Boehner of Ohio pauses at a news conference to announce an agreement for a 2-month extension to the payroll tax cut on Capitol Hill Thursday, Dec. 22, 2011, in Washington.

Claims lowest since '08 as job market improves

WASHINGTON (AP)—In the latest sign that the economy is surging at year’s end, unemployment claims have dropped to the lowest level since April 2008, long before anyone realized that the nation was in a recession.

Claims fell by 4,000 last week to 364,000, the Labor Department said Thursday. It was the third straight weekly drop. The four-week average of claims, a less volatile gauge, fell for the 11th time in 13 weeks and stands at the lowest since June 2008.

While the economy remains vulnerable to threats, particularly a recession in Europe, the steady improvement in the job market is unquestionable.

“The underlying trend is undeniably positive,” said Jennifer Lee, senior economist with BMO Capital Markets. “I think

everyone is starting to come around to the view that, yes, there is a recovery going on.”

Unemployment claims are a sort of week-to-week EKG for the job market. Except for a spike this spring, after the earthquake and tsunami in Japan hurt U.S. manufacturing, they have fallen steadily for a year and a half.

Claims peaked at 659,000 in March 2009. In the four years before the Great Recession, they mostly stayed between 300,000 and 350,000. That claims are edging closer to that range is a sign that the layoffs of the past three years have all but stopped.

“We haven’t yet really seen substantial numbers of new jobs, but this is definitely an encouraging sign of what lies down the road,” said Sam Bullard, an economist at Wells Fargo.

The steady decline may also herald a further decline in the

unemployment rate, which fell in November to 8.6 percent from 9 percent the month before. The December rate will be announced Jan. 6.

If unemployment claims keep declining, the unemployment rate might fall as low as 8 percent before the November elections, said Dan Greenhaus, chief global strategist at BTIG LLC, a boutique brokerage.

The presidential election will turn on the economy. Ronald Reagan holds the post-World War II record for winning a second term with the highest unemployment rate. He won in 1984 with unemployment at 7.2 percent.

Economists will also watch closely on Jan. 6 to find out how many jobs were added this month. It added at least 100,000 each month from July through November, the best five-month streak since 2006.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Best Buy cancels some online orders

ATLANTA (AP)—Best Buy has alerted some customers that it will not be able to fill their online orders, just days before Christmas. The largest U.S. specialty electronics retailer said late Wednesday that “overwhelming demand for some products from Bestbuy.com has led to a problem redeeming online orders made in November and December. The Minneapolis company declined Thursday to specify how many orders are affected or which products are out of stock. The shortages are a black eye for Best Buy, which has beefed up its online campaign to fight off intense competition from online retailers and discount stores. And the holiday season is crucial for retailers like Best Buy because it can make

up to 40 percent of annual sales.

Oil rises for 4th day, touches \$100 a barrel

NEW YORK (AP)—Oil prices rose for the fourth day in a row Thursday amid signs of an improving U.S. economy and concerns about global supplies. The price of benchmark crude rose 86 cents to finish at \$99.53 per barrel in New York. At one point in the session it hit \$100.05. Brent crude, which is used to price crude produced in many foreign countries and is important for U.S. gasoline producers, rose 18 cents to end at \$107.89 per barrel in London. A series of positive reports in the U.S. suggested that the economy is slowly improving. That has sent stock prices and oil prices higher this week.



LEADING INDICATORS

DOW	S&P	NASDAQ
12,169.65	1,254.00	2,599.45
+61.91	+10.28	+21.48
+0.51%	+0.83%	+0.83%

EXCHANGE RATES

Australian Dollar	0.984	Hong Kong Dollar	7.7804	Philippine Peso	43.4775
British Pound	0.6376	Indian Rupee	52.755	Singapore Dollar	1.2912
Canadian Dollar	1.0204	Indonesian Rupiah	9015	South Korean Won	1149.15
Chinese Yuan	6.3391	Japanese Yen	78.0825	Swiss Franc	0.935
Euro	0.7652	Malaysian Ringgit	3.156	Taiwan Dollar	30.291
		New Zealand Dollar	1.2909	Thailand Baht	31.285

Nation

Occupy protesters sue over free speech, force

By ERIKA NIEDOWSKI
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Most major Occupy encampments have been dispersed, but they live on in a flurry of lawsuits in which protesters are asserting their constitutional rights to free speech and assembly and challenging authorities' mass arrests and use of force to break up tent cities.

Lawyers representing protesters have filed lawsuits—or are planning them—in state and federal courts from coast to coast, challenging eviction orders and what they call heavy-handed police tactics and the banning of demonstrators from public properties.

Some say the fundamental right of protest has been criminalized in places, with protesters facing arrest and charges while doing nothing more than exercising protected rights to demonstrate.

"When I think about the tents as an expression of the First Amendment here, I compare it to Tahrir Square in Egypt," said Carol Sobel, co-chairwoman of the National Lawyers Guild's Mass Defense Committee.

"Our government is outraged when military forces and those governments come down on the demonstrators. But they won't extend the same rights in this



Nick Thommen, of Oregon, left, helps wash the eyes of Dave Sickler, of Albany, right, who was pepper sprayed by Albany police officers when police forcibly removed an Occupy Albany tent from Academy Park in Albany, N.Y., on Thursday, Dec. 22, 2011.

country," she said. "They praise that as a fight for democracy, the values we treasure. It comes here and these people are riff-raff."

A handful of protesters began camping out in September in a lower Manhattan plaza, demanding an end to corporate excess and income inequality, and were soon joined by scores of others who set up tents and remained around the clock. Simi-

lar camps sprang up in dozens of cities nationwide and around the world, but patience wore thin, and many camps—including the flagship at Zuccotti Park and in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Denver, Los Angeles, Oakland, Philadelphia and Portland, Ore.—were forcibly cleared.

Public officials and police unions have generally defended moves to break up the camps, citing health and safety con-

cerns. They also said that responding to problems at Occupy encampments was draining crime-fighting resources.

Protester lawsuits are now beginning to wend their way through the legal system, and attorneys say more are likely on the way.

The National Lawyers Guild and the American Civil Liberties Union of Northern California sued the Oakland Police

Department in federal court in November, saying police and other agencies violated demonstrators' Fourth Amendment rights by using excessive force—including "flash-bang" grenades—against demonstrators who posed no safety threat. The suit says officials also violated their First Amendment rights to assemble and demonstrate.

Oakland Mayor Jean Quan on Wednesday announced an independent investigation into the police response.

In Austin, Texas, this week, a federal judge has been hearing the case of two Occupy protesters who were arrested and later barred from City Hall under a policy their attorneys call overly broad and say amounts to a ban on speech. The Texas Civil Rights Project says around 106 people have been banned since the protests began, in some cases for up to a year. The policy says a criminal trespass notice may be issued for "unreasonably disruptive" conduct.

Yvette Felarca is among those suing campus police and administration officials at the University of California, Berkeley, after officers forcefully dispersed a group of Occupy protesters and others rallying for public education last month.

Calif. nurses strike over benefits, staffing

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP)—Nurses in California went on strike Thursday—some for the second time in three months—in the latest dispute between nurses and hospital management over health care costs, staffing levels and sick leave.

The California Nurses Association—the union behind the one-day walkout—expected 6,000 nurses at nine hospitals in the San Francisco and Los Angeles areas to participate, although a hospital official said a "significant number" of nurses had crossed the picket lines.

Sutter spokeswoman Kami Lloyd did not have an exact number of the nurses who went to work but said 63 percent of the nurses at the Sutter Delta Medical Center in Antioch crossed picket lines, while 59 percent went to work at the Eden Medical Center in Castro Valley.

Union representatives did not immediately return calls Thursday afternoon seeking information on the number of nurses who refused to honor the strike.

The strike followed a walkout called by the association on Sept. 22 and came on the same day that more than 1,000 nurses in New York City gave notice that they plan to go on strike in January.

Officials at the California hos-



Eric Koch, a critical care nurse, speaks to fellow nurses dressed as "The Grinch" from the the Dr. Seuss children's books at Alta Bates Summer Medical Center, Thursday, Dec. 22, 2011 in Berkeley, Calif.

pitals said replacement nurses had been brought in and patient care was not immediately affected. "Strikes are a last resort, but nurses will only strike if they want to make sure that patients have safe care every day," said Charles Idelson, a spokesman for the association.

The San Francisco Bay area hospitals targeted by the nurses are controlled by Sutter Health. The nurses' contract with Sutter expired about six months ago, and union officials have objected to changes in paid sick leave and health care premiums proposed by Sutter.

In Southern California, nurses at Long Beach Memorial Hospital and adjoining Miller Children's Hospital, which

are not controlled by Sutter Health, have raised concerns about staffing levels they say don't allow them to take meal and rest breaks.

In Oakland, dozens of nurses picketed outside Alta Bates Summit Medical Center. They chanted and carried signs that read "RNs on strike for patient care."

Leslie Silket, a registered nurse and union representative, said she had worked at the center for 21 years.

"Today's strike is to let Sutter know that we are standing solid in solidarity to fight back their corporate greed," said Silket, 44. "We are fighting for our patients. We are fighting for our contract."

Army report: Some Arlington markers may need replacement

ARLINGTON, Va. (AP)—Thousands of grave markers at Arlington National Cemetery may need to be replaced or added to accurately account for the dead, following a meticulous Army review of each of the nearly 260,000 headstones and niche covers on the grounds.

In a report to Congress on Thursday, the Army found potential discrepancies between headstones and cemetery paperwork on about 64,000 grave markers—about one in four.

Congress ordered the review last year following reports of misidentified and misplaced graves that led to the ouster of the cemetery's top executives.

The report found no further evidence of misplaced graves, though it cautioned that its review is not complete and that some errors could have gone undetected.

There are potentially thousands of minor errors, including misspelled names, or incorrect military ranks and dates of birth and death.

The Army compared information on every headstone to its internal records, scouring handwritten logs of the dead from the Civil War and a hodgepodge of other records to verify accuracy.

In an interview, the cemetery's executive director, Kathryn Condon, said reviews are ongoing and

it's premature to try to estimate exactly how many headstones may need replacement.

To be sure, many of the 64,000 discrepancies will turn up no problem with a headstone—it may be as simple as a typo on an internal record. And in many cases, the discrepancies are not errors at all but reflect past practices at the cemetery that are now considered outdated.

One of the biggest surprises uncovered by the review was that in most of the early 20th century, the cemetery did not include the name of a wife on a headstone when she was buried next to her husband. Under current practices, the name of the spouse is etched onto the back of the headstone.

Condon said the cemetery will correct that by adding the spouse's name to the gravesite. She said it is not only the right thing to do but is also required by law.

Accounting for the forgotten spouses alone will require thousands of corrections, officials said. In some cases, replacement headstones will be made. In cases where the headstones are considered historic, footstones will be added.

Sen. Claire McCaskill, D-Mo., who was critical of the old management team and has been supportive of Condon's reform efforts, said the cemetery "is now a turnaround story."

ACROSS THE NATION

Profiling lawsuit could add to sheriff's troubles

PHOENIX (AP)—The self-described "America's toughest sheriff" has survived firestorms in the past, but none in the past decade have been as bad as what the lawman has been hit with in the past few weeks. And in a few days, a federal judge could make things worse for Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio. On Thursday, U.S. District Judge Murray Snow heard arguments over a lawsuit from a handful of Latino residents alleging racial profiling during Arpaio's immigration sweeps. He could send it to trial, throw it out, or declare that Arpaio uses racial profiling in his immigration enforcement. The accusations echo those in a scathing U.S. Justice Department report last week that resulted in the sheriff's office losing its power to check inmates' immigration status.

1 dead after 2 men shot in downtown Tucson

TUCSON, Ariz. (AP)—Police say one man has died after a shooting in a Tucson, Ariz., arts district that left another man wounded. Police say the man died Thursday afternoon at a hospital but the other victim is expected to survive. Their names haven't been released. Police spokeswoman Sgt. Maria Hawke says the shooting occurred in an alley about a half-mile north of downtown at about 11 a.m. Thursday.

60 left homeless by San Francisco apartment fire

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—As many as 60 people were left homeless Thursday by a San Francisco apartment building fire that took firefighters nearly three hours to control, Fire Chief Joanne Hayes-White said. The five-alarm blaze engulfed three buildings before 150 firefighters, or about half the department's daytime fire-fighting force, were able to bring the fire under control around 3 p.m., Hayes-White said. The blaze sent one firefighter to the hospital with a burn to the neck, and a civilian was treated for mild smoke inhalation, Hayes-White said. A second firefighter, originally reported as hospitalized, was given oxygen at the scene.

Asia

Amid NKorea mourning, vows to support new leader

PYONGYANG, North Korea (AP)—Mourning centers have been set up in towns and villages across North Korea in a stepped-up show of public grief Friday over the death of leader Kim Jong Il, but attention and allegiances were already clearly shifting to his young son.

Scenes of dramatic mass mourning have been a daily occurrence in Pyongyang since Kim's death was announced on Monday. Thousands of North Koreans—including heir Kim Jong Un and other top officials—have poured into a funeral palace in the capital to view his body or bow before his portrait.

By Friday, mourning stations had also been established in provincial, city and county seats, and at institutions and enterprises across the country.

"The sorrow at the loss of our leader is tremendous. But we would not stay in grief only," Sok Kil Nam, a 24-year-old worker at the Chollima Steel Complex in the city of Nampho, told The Associated Press. He added: "As long as we have great comrade Kim Jong Un, the cause of the respected General Kim Jong Il will go on, so we continue working, not leaving our work sites."

North Korea's official media have been quick to feature the younger Kim in coverage of the mourning—a strong indication

that the country's leadership is behind installing the 20-something son as Kim Jong Il's successor and the public face of the nation.

Officials in Seoul and Washington, after initial jitters over possible instability, are calling the transition so far a smooth one. There have been no outward signs of unrest on the streets or unusual troop movements along the borders.

"We continue to monitor and assess the situation and continue normal operations for stability and security in the region," said Cmdr. Ron Steiner, a spokesman for the U.S. 7th Fleet, which is based in Japan.

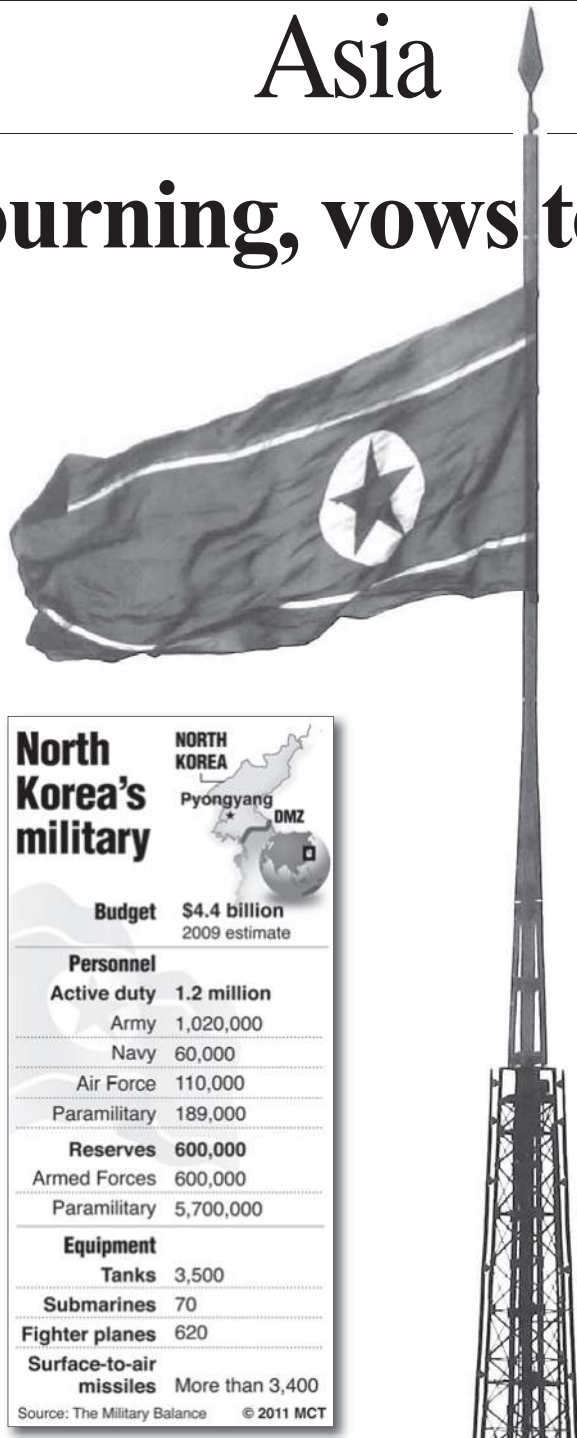
The North, however, remains highly sensitive to what it sees as outside threats.

One North Korean media outlet known for being particularly strident in its commentary slammed South Korea for putting its military on a heightened alert level after Kim's death, calling it an "insult" that derides the dignity of a nation in mourning.

The government-run website, Uriminzokkiri, also said the fate of the relations between the two Koreas depends on how the South deals with requests from its civilians to visit the North to pay respects to Kim.

"We are watching the attitude of the South Korean government," it said.

It said Pyongyang will accept



North Korea's military	
Budget	\$4.4 billion 2009 estimate
Personnel	
Active duty	1.2 million
Army	1,020,000
Navy	60,000
Air Force	110,000
Paramilitary	189,000
Reserves	600,000
Armed Forces	600,000
Paramilitary	5,700,000
Equipment	
Tanks	3,500
Submarines	70
Fighter planes	620
Surface-to-air missiles	More than 3,400
Source: The Military Balance © 2011 MCT	

A North Korean flag is seen at half-staff in memory of the late leader Kim Jong Il from a lookout post in the border village of Panmunjom in the demilitarized zone (DMZ) in South Korea Thursday, Dec. 22, 2011.

anyone from South Korea hoping to pay respects to Kim Jong Il and that routes by both air and land will be opened. North Korea has said through its other media that foreign delegations would not be allowed in to attend the official funeral for Kim on Dec. 28-29.

Keenly aware of the sensitivities, South Korean President Lee Myung-bak has sought to assure Pyongyang that his country was "not hostile," despite putting its front-line troops on alert since Kim's death was announced. On Friday, the presidential Blue House announced it had lifted an emergency mode for all government workers except those involved in security and foreign affairs.

Even so, South Korean Unification Ministry spokesman Choi Boh-seon said his government remains "firm" in its position not to allow civilians to visit North Korea to pay respects to Kim Jong Il, except the bereaved families of former President Kim Dae-jung and former Hyundai Asan chairman Chung Mong-hun.

Kim met with Kim Jong Il in 2000 in Pyongyang in the first summit meeting between the two Koreas. Chung led a joint tourism project with North Korea that yielded much-sought hard currency for Pyongyang until its suspension in 2008.

In a parliamentary hearing,

South Korean Unification Minister Yu Woo-ik said Seoul is open to dialogue with the North, if that would be constructive.

"I hope the emergence of the new leader will lead North Korea to move in the right direction and enhance the livelihoods of the North Korean people," Yu said.

Asked if Seoul considers Kim Jong Un as successor to Kim Jong Il, Yu only said his government is "closely monitoring the issue."

Communication between the United States and North Korea also still appears open as the North continues its official 11-day mourning period. But the State Department said it wasn't expecting any meeting with the North Koreans this week, and little contact before the mourning period ends Dec. 29.

In a strong endorsement of the young Kim, the North's main newspaper Rodong Sinmun has urged the country to "rally, rally and rally behind great comrade Kim Jong Un and faithfully uphold his leadership."

It called him "the outstanding leader of our party, military and people and a great successor."

South Korea's intelligence agency has told Parliament members that an ad hoc committee in which Kim Jong Un is a vice chairman is expected to handle key state affairs before he formally becomes the country's leader.

Pentagon: US concedes mistakes in Pakistani deaths

WASHINGTON (AP)—After 10 years of war in Afghanistan, a persistent lack of trust between the U.S. and Pakistan still complicates operations along the critical Afghanistan border and was a key factor in the errant American airstrikes late last month that killed 24 Pakistani troops.

U.S. officials on Thursday accepted some blame for the deadly incident that infuriated Pakistani leaders, prompting Pakistan to shut down key supply routes for the war and further eroding America's already rocky relations with Islamabad. The Defense Department briefed reporters

Thursday on the conclusions reached in its investigation into the November incident. But the U.S. did not apologize, despite the embarrassing series of communications and coordination errors. Pentagon officials said Thursday that military leaders had spoken by phone to Pakistan army chief Gen. Ashfaq Pervez Kayani about the report's conclusions, but have not yet given him a detailed briefing.

Pakistan refused to cooperate in the investigation. And the U.S. report—placing some of the blame on Islamabad—is likely to only increase their fury,

hamper any hope of rebuilding the relationship and delay the opening of the supply routes.

In a Pentagon briefing, Brig. Gen. Stephen Clark, an Air Force special operations officer who led the investigation, made it clear that U.S. forces were fired on first and acted in self-defense.

But he acknowledged that efforts to determine who was firing on the U.S. troops and whether there were friendly Pakistani forces in the area—the primary questions in any cross-border incident—failed because U.S. forces used inaccurate maps, were unaware of

Pakistani border post locations and mistakenly provided the wrong location for the troops.

There is "an overarching lack of trust between the two sides" that keeps them from giving each other specific details on troops or combat outpost locations, Clark said as he went through a blow-by-blow account of the events that began late on Nov. 25 and continued overnight.

U.S. and NATO commanders, Clark said, believe that some of their military operations have been compromised when they've given details and locations to the Pakistanis.

New Zealand's National Radio.

"There has been quite a lot of stuff falling out of cupboards, off shelves in shops and that sort of thing, again," he said.

Isaacs said his immediate concern was for demolition workers involved in tearing down buildings wrecked in previous quakes.

"It ... started slow then really got going. It was a big swaying one but not as jolting or as violent as in February," Christchurch resident Rita Langley said. "Everyone seems fairly chilled, though the traffic buildup sounds like a beehive that has just been kicked as everyone leaves (the) town (center)."

Strong earthquake rattles NZ's Christchurch

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—A strong earthquake struck the New Zealand city of Christchurch on Friday, rattling buildings, sending goods tumbling from shelves and prompting terrified holiday shoppers to flee into the streets. There was no tsunami alert issued and the city appeared to have been spared major damage.

One person was injured at a city mall and was taken to a hospital, Christchurch police said in a statement. But there were no immediate reports of serious injuries or widespread damage in the city, which is still recover-

ing from a devastating February earthquake that killed 182 people and destroyed much of the downtown area.

The 5.8-magnitude quake struck Friday afternoon 16 miles (26 kilometers) north of Christchurch at a depth of 2.5 miles (4 kilometers), the U.S. Geological Survey said. The quake was followed by a series of sharp aftershocks, including one with a magnitude of 5.3 and a depth of just 1.8 miles (3 kilometers).

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center did not issue an alert.

The city's airport was evacu-

ated and all city malls shut down as a precaution.

Warwick Isaacs, demolitions manager for the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority, said most buildings had been evacuated "as an emergency measure." The area has recorded more than 7,000 earthquakes since a magnitude-7 quake rocked the city on Sept. 4, 2010. That quake did not cause any deaths.

Rock falls had occurred in one area and there was liquefaction—when an earthquake forces underground water up through loose soil—in several places, Isaacs told

ASIAN BRIEFS

Pakistan PM alleges conspiracy to oust government

ISLAMABAD (AP)—Pakistan's prime minister claimed Thursday there was a conspiracy to oust the country's civilian government, a sign of growing tension with the army over a secret memo sent to Washington earlier this year asking for help in averting a supposed military coup. The conflict between the army and the government intensified this week after the Supreme Court began a hearing into the scandal, which has already forced Pakistan's ambassador to the U.S. to resign and also threatens the president. The political crisis comes as Pakistan is already facing a violent Taliban insurgency, a failing economy and severe tension with its most important ally, the United States, over NATO airstrikes that killed 24 Pakistani soldiers in November.

Suu Kyi's party registers to run in Myanmar polls

NAYPYITAW, Myanmar (AP)—Opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi formally registered her party Friday for any upcoming elections, returning the Nobel laureate to the political arena. Suu Kyi decided last month to formally rejoin politics in the military-dominated

country after recent reforms by the nominally civilian administration that took power this year. Suu Kyi and National League for Democracy leader Tin Oo registered the party together at the Union Election Commission in the capital, Naypyitaw. The party boycotted last year's general elections because of restrictive rules that among other things prevented Suu Kyi from being a candidate. The government has since lifted many of those restrictions.

Bodies of asylum seekers found off Bali island

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—Search teams say the bloated bodies of asylum seekers whose overcrowded ship capsized over the weekend have been recovered in waters off Indonesia's resort island of Bali. The vessel—carrying 250 asylum seekers from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Turkey and Iran—was hit by a huge wave in stormy weather. Only 49 people are known to have survived. Sutrisno, a rescue official, said 90 corpses have been plucked from the sea so far, many of them carried as far as 250 miles (400 kilometers) from the capsized site by swift currents, including 16 found Thursday off Bali.

World

Bombs rock Baghdad, raising fears of sectarian war

BAGHDAD (AP)—A terrifying wave of bombs tore through mostly Shiite neighborhoods of Baghdad on Thursday, killing at least 69 people and evoking fears that Iraq could dissolve into a new round of sectarian violence now that American troops have left.

The attacks appeared to be a well-coordinated assault by Sunni militants linked to al-Qaida and targeted markets, grocery stores, cafes and government buildings in a dozen neighborhoods. They coincided with a government crisis that has already strained ties between the two sects to the breaking point.

For many Iraqis, this could be the beginning of a nightmare scenario: The fragile alliance in the governing coalition is collapsing, large-scale violence bearing the hallmarks of al-Qaida insurgents has returned and Shiite Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki may be moving to grab the already limited power of the minority Sunnis.

"The conditions that perpetuate civil wars are making a hasty comeback," said Ramzy Mardini, an analyst at the Institute for the Study of War in Washington.

The bombings may be linked more to the withdrawal of the last U.S. troops Sunday than the political crisis, but all together the developments raise the specter of a return to the Shiite-

Sunni sectarian bloodshed that pushed Iraq to the brink of civil war in 2006 and 2007.

Al-Maliki is engaged in a showdown with the top Sunni

political leader in the country. His government has issued an arrest warrant for Sunni Vice President Tariq al-Hashemi for what al-Hashemi says are trumped-up

charges that he ran hit squads against government officials.

That has thrown Iraq's political community into a crisis, with Sunnis suspicious that al-Maliki is making a power grab in the wake of the American military departure.

Thrown into this already heated mixture was some of the worst

violence Iraq has seen this year.

At least 16 blasts went off across Baghdad, killing 69 people and wounding nearly 200 more. Most exploded in the morning but at least two struck Thursday evening.

The deadliest attack was in the Karrada neighborhood, where a suicide bomber driv-

ing an explosives-laden vehicle blew himself up outside a government office. Two police officers at the scene said the bomber was driving an ambulance and told guards that he needed to get to a nearby hospital. After the guards let him through, he drove to the building and blew himself up, the officers said.



Iraqi security forces inspect a crater caused by a car bomb attack in the neighborhood of Karrada in Baghdad, Iraq, Thursday, Dec. 22, 2011.

Despite observers, Syria's Assad hikes crackdown

BEIRUT (AP)—Bashar Assad's regime would appear to be setting itself on a collision course: It let in outside observers for the first time Thursday to monitor his commitment to halting the crackdown on dissent, even as his security forces unleashed a fiercer onslaught this week, killing more than 200 in two days.

But the Syrian president and his inner circle are veterans at playing for time, maneuvering and denying realities on the ground, and they seem confident they can deflect pressure from Arab neighbors without easing their campaign to crush the uprising.

As an advance team for the Arab League observers flew into Damascus on Thursday, activists said the regime was already acting to prevent the mission from seeing protesters arrested in the crackdown, which is supposed to be part of its mandate. Thousands of

prisoners have been moved into military facilities, which are off limits to the monitors, two dissidents said, citing reports from sources on the ground.

By allowing the observers in, Syria has avoided a worse scenario for the time being, defusing Arab League threats to ask the U.N. Security Council for action against Damascus.

The strategy, opponents and outside observers say, is to keep international pressure at bay for as long as possible while the regime tries to snuff out the uprising. Activists said given the high death toll of the past few days, the Syrian government appears to be furiously trying to control the situation on the ground before the full monitoring team arrives.

Tuesday saw the deadliest single attack by government forces so far in the nine-month crackdown.

A witness and activist groups said about 110 unarmed civil-

ians fled the mountain village of Kfar Owaid near the Turkish border and were trapped in a valley by military forces, who then proceeded to systematically kill all of them in an hours-long barrage with tanks, bombs and gunfire. No one survived the onslaught, the activists said.

Government forces appeared by Wednesday evening to have gained full control of the rebellious Jabal al-Zawiya region, where Kfar Owaid is located. The region has been the scene of clashes between troops and army defectors, as well as weeks of intense anti-government protests. An activist who was on the run from the village said thousands of troops and special forces were deployed.

"There are tanks and checkpoints every few meters, snipers everywhere," the activist told The Associated Press by telephone, speaking on condition of anonymity for fear for his safety.

Turkey-France ties fray over Armenia genocide bill

PARIS (AP)—Ties between France and Turkey, strategic allies and trading partners, abruptly unraveled Thursday after French legislators passed a bill making it a crime to deny that the mass killings of Armenians by Ottoman Turks nearly a century ago constitute genocide.

The bill strikes at the heart of national honor in Turkey, which denies the genocide label and insists the 1915 massacres occurred during civil unrest as the Ottoman Empire collapsed, with losses on both sides. But it's seen as a matter of principle for some French politicians, and a matter of long-overdue justice for the half a million people in France of Armenian descent, many of whom had relatives among the 1.5 million Armenians killed.

The French bill still needs Senate approval, but after it passed the lower house, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan halted bilateral political and economic contacts, suspended military cooperation and ordered his country's ambassador home for consultations. Turkey argues France is trampling freedom of expression and that French President Nicolas Sarkozy is on a vote-getting mission before April presidential elections.

France formally recognized the 1915 killings as genocide in 2001, but provided no penalty

for anyone refuting that. The bill passed Thursday sets a punishment of up to one year in prison and a fine of euro45,000 (\$59,000) for those who deny or "outrageously minimize" the killings, putting such action on par with denial of the Holocaust.

The diplomatic riposte by Turkey over the vote by lawmakers in France's lower house, the National Assembly, may get even tougher. It hurts ties as both NATO members are involved in international efforts for peace from Syria to Afghanistan.

"Our measures and precautions will come to life stage-by-stage according to France's position," Erdogan told reporters in Ankara.

France expressed regret over Turkey's response.

"It is important, in the current context, that we keep the paths of dialogue and cooperation open," Foreign Minister Alain Juppe said in a statement.

Strains have plagued the relationship between Paris and Ankara in recent years, in large part because Sarkozy opposes mostly-Muslim Turkey's bid to join the European Union. The bill reached the French parliament after Sarkozy visited Armenia in October and urged Turkey, "a great country" to

"honor itself by revisiting its history like other countries in the world have done."

But for it to become law, the Senate must also pass the bill. There is a small window of time

to quickly do so, between Jan. 10 and Feb. 24 when a four-month freeze on all but the most critical legislation goes into effect ahead of spring presidential and legislative elections.

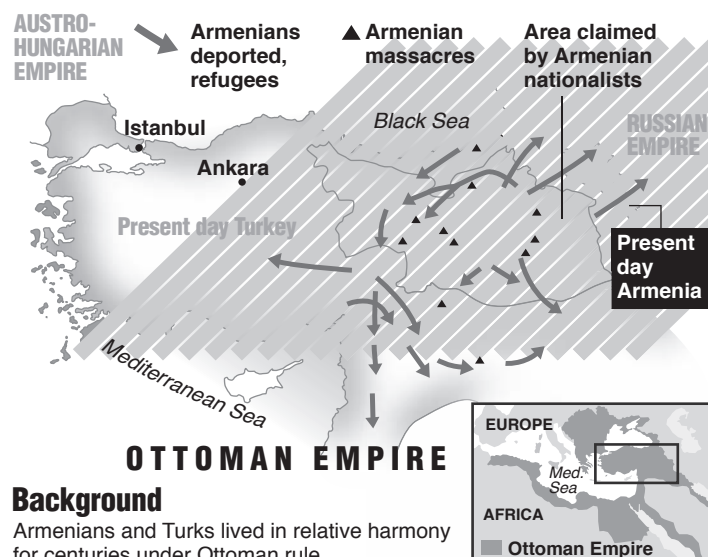
Armenian genocide

France is on track to vote on a bill that would make denying the Armenian genocide illegal, a measure that has angered many in Turkey and France.

The controversy

***Armenia says** that as many as 1.5 million of its people were massacred by Turkish Ottoman troops during World War I

***Turkey says** 300,000 to 500,000 Armenians, and as many Turks, died in fighting when Armenia sided with invading Russian forces



Background

Armenians and Turks lived in relative harmony for centuries under Ottoman rule

1912-13 Turkey loses much of its European territory and influence, which fuels the rise of nationalist "young Turks," who accuse Armenians of disloyalty to the state

Source: "A Shameful Act" by Taner Akcam, Encyclopedia Britannica, Reuters, Eurasianet

1915-18 Massacres during World War I; Armenians were relocated within the country, forced on death marches; April 24, the start of the campaign in 1915, is now recognized as Genocide Memorial Day

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WORLD BRIEFS

Judge asked to unshackle Guantanamo prisoner

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)—The Guantanamo Bay prisoner accused of orchestrating the attacks on the USS Cole should be permitted to be unshackled when he attends legal meetings at the U.S. base in Cuba, his lawyers said in a legal motion released Thursday. Lawyers for Saudi prisoner Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri filed a motion asking the judge in his upcoming war crimes tribunal to allow him to be unrestrained in meetings to prepare his defense. They said they had asked the detention center commander to allow the restraints to be removed but were denied. The lawyers argue that al-Nashiri needs to be comfortable and able to move about as they spend long hours preparing his defense on war crimes charges. They also say it's unnecessary to restrain him when they are all locked together in his cell.

Venezuela prosecutor opposes extradition of rebel

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)—Venezuela's top prosecutor said Thursday that she doesn't think Colombia has provided a proper request for

the extradition of a Colombian rebel commander who was captured in Venezuela. Attorney General Luisa Ortega said she has provided her opinion to the Supreme Court, which will decide on Colombia's extradition request. Guillermo Torres Cueter, better known by the alias "Julian Conrado," was captured in southwestern Venezuela in May, and the authorities say he is a commander of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC.

16 killed in violence in Mexican state

VERACRUZ, Mexico (AP)—A group of five gunmen sprayed three passenger buses with bullets in Mexico's Gulf coast state of Veracruz on Thursday, killing seven passengers, before being chased down and killed by soldiers. Veracruz state government spokeswoman Gina Dominguez said the gunmen apparently resisted detention and died in the ensuing confrontation. They all had rifles and were traveling in a bulletproof vehicle. While the attackers' identities and cartel affiliation have not yet been established, the men killed match witness descriptions of the assailants in the bus attacks, Dominguez said.

YoungStyle

Identify otherworldly craft

By KATHY ANTONIOTTI
KNIGHT RIDDER NEWSPAPERS

In a moment of weakness, my friend Ron confided to the small group that years ago, he had spotted a UFO while he was flying an airplane. He regretted the admission the very second it came out of his mouth—and with good reason.

The pilot suddenly became the focus of teasing by the skeptics at the gathering. But he never wavered from his story that he and the man sitting with him in the cockpit of the plane saw a disc-shaped orb outside the window that matched his speed for a few moments before racing away into the night sky.

Now, Ron may be a nut, but he isn't a kook, and I believed his story—mainly because he believed it. However, he did realize it was a mistake to tell his tale in front of me.

"Now, I'll probably read about it in the paper," he said with remorse.

Sure enough, it just so happens that I received a book with instructions to make UFOs in the mail that very week. I took the incident as a sign I should indeed write about Ron's personal UFO encounter.

UFO is an acronym for the term "unidentified flying object" and describes an object or light that defies explanation. People have reported seeing strange crafts that can hover at a standstill, take off at incredible speeds and quickly change direction. They generally believe they are seeing visiting spaceships from other planets inhabited by beings more technologically advanced than we are.

Usually, investigators find there are ordinary explanations for the sightings. People have reported lots of things as UFOs, including missiles, birds, swarms of insects and weather balloons. Actually, investigators can explain all but a small number of UFO reports and most scientists don't think there is enough evidence to support the belief that these sightings are really objects coming from a distant place.

In 1952, Project Blue Book was launched by the United States Air Force to determine whether any of the 12,000 UFO reports were a threat to national security. From 1966 to 1968, independent studies by scientists at the University of Colorado determined that there was no credible information to indicate the reports were true. Project Blue Book ended in 1969.

But conjecture remains that life exists on other planets and that UFOs are the conveyance of choice by extraterrestrials. The idea has been the subject of many books, motion pictures and television programs. UFOs seem to spark our collective imagination.

This hovering flying saucer may look otherworldly, but it is made with objects found on good old planet Earth. Directions came from the book "Every Kid Needs Things That Fly," by inventor and designer Ritchie Kinmont, of Ogden, Utah. The book also contains directions for jet packs and hot air balloons. It retails for \$14.95 and is available online at Amazon.com.

Supplies you will need:

- 18-inch Mylar, helium-filled balloon.
- 2 oz. Styrofoam bowl.
- 3 drinking straws.
- 6 flat washers.
- Paper punch.
- Transparent tape.
- Cut the bottom off a 12-ounce Styrofoam bowl and the edge around the top rim.

Punch three equally spaced one-fourth inch holes around the smaller opening of the bowl for landing struts.

Tape down the fill port (where the helium was inserted.) Tape a washer to opposite side from the port to make the balloon float in a level position.

Tape the ring securely in the center of the balloon. Insert the straws through the holes as struts and tape to the balloon inside the ring. Trim the other ends at an angle so the craft sits evenly.

Tape a washer to the underside of the balloon for ballast, if necessary. As an option, you can make lights with glow-in-the-dark dimensional fabric paint.



This painted coconut is actually an unusual postcard that bears the mark of a pirate flag; a skull and crossbones.

MCT

They'll go nuts for postcard

By KATHY ANTONIOTTI
AKRON BEACON JOURNAL

Real pirates menaced the high seas long ago, especially in the 17th and 18th centuries. They still do in some parts of the world.

Pirates and pirate stories have never been more popular than they are today.

When Johnny Depp first appeared on the big screen in "Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl" in 2003 as the irresistible Capt. Jack Sparrow and asked the question, "Savvy?" we learned to love the scalawag, which roughly translates to "dirty dog" in pirate-speak.

The timing couldn't have been better for the 2005 opening of the interactive, audio-animatronic Pirate Soul Museum in Key West, Fla. Almost 500 authentic pirate

artifacts are on display, including Blackbeard's musketlike blunderbuss and an actual treasure chest belonging to the pirate Thomas Tew of Rhode Island.

You'll see and hear the villainous Blackbeard speak as his head hangs from the gallows and his braided beard swings in the breeze. You'll find the passage-way to his bounty with the help of an interactive computer at a tavern that might have been found on the famed Tortuga Island. You will imagine yourself in the pitch-black hold of a ship as you slip on earphones and listen to the captain barking out his orders.

You might even catch yourself saying "Aarrrrghhh! Avast, ye mate," as you walk out the door and back into reality.

This painted coconut is actually an unusual postcard that bears

the mark of a pirate flag — a skull and crossbones. It was painted by a Key West artist and cost less than \$3 to mail by parcel post. It arrived at its destination in just a few days.

If your spring break takes you to Southern climes where coconuts are plentiful, gather a few to send home an unusual greeting using these directions. (You can also purchase coconuts online and, occasionally, at craft stores.)

Supplies you will need:

- 1 unshelled coconut.
- Acrylic paint in white, black and other assorted colors.
- Gold three-dimensional paint.
- Paint brushes.
- Pencil.

Wash and dry the coconut.

Draw a horizontal line dividing

the coconut in half. Reserve the smoothest side for the address and your message.

On the opposite side, draw your design. Fill in the design with acrylic paint. Write the name of the city you are visiting near the pattern in three-dimensional paint. Let dry.

Turn the coconut over and cover the other side with white acrylic paint. When dry, write your home address on the upper left corner, the name and address of the person you are sending your postcard to in the center and use the lower quarter of the side to write your message in permanent marker.

Take to the post office and mail.

The Pirate Soul Museum is at 524 Front St. in Key West. Hours are 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily. Admission is \$13.50 for adults and \$7.95 for kids. 305-292-1113.

Dunk balls in bucket for a game of catch; wear a bathing suit

By KATHY ANTONIOTTI
AKRON BEACON JOURNAL

If I hear one more person say, "it's not the heat, it's the humidity," I think I just might scream. We all know it is hot outside. In an Ohio summer, humidity is just part of the equation.

All I need to do is remind myself of the snow, wind and cold of an average Ohio February. I'll take the heat any day.

There are plenty of ways to get through extra-warm temperatures if you have some water available to cool you off. And you don't need a swimming pool and a lot of expensive toys. A bucket of water, some sponges and maybe a bathing suit are all you need for some summer fun.

Sponge Ball Square Arms, col-



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Sponge Ball Square Arms are great in the pool or for a refreshing backyard game of catch to cool off.

orful multitentacled sponge balls I found at Family Fun on the Web, are great in the pool or for a backyard game of catch. Use the sponges as

you would water balloons, with the added advantage of reusability.

You can see this craft, made with colorful kitchen sponges, online at <http://familyfun.go.com> and search for "sponge ball."

Supplies you will need for each ball:

- Three plain kitchen sponges.
- Strong string.
- Scissors.
- Marker.
- Ruler.
- Bucket of water for each player.
- For each ball, use three new kitchen sponges, fresh from the package and still slightly damp.

To make the strips, measure and mark the short sides of a sponge and cut on the lines to make five, 6-inch lengthwise strips from each sponge. Repeat with the other two sponges.

Place a 10-inch piece of strong string on the center of your workspace.

With the string in the center, lay a row of the strips on top of the string, rotating the colors into a base of five strips. Put another layer on top of the first, making sure you don't place two identical colors on top of one another. Repeat with a third layer on top of the second layer.

While keeping the sponge strips lined up on top of one another, tie the string into a tight knot, pulling the strips of sponge into a ball shape.

For a great way to cool off, two people can stand a few feet apart with a bucket of water for each. See how many times you can toss and catch the ball, taking a step apart and dunking the ball in the bucket before each throw.

Good Housekeeping

When painting a house, how cold is too cold?

By ALAN J. HEAVENS
THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

Q: I want to paint my house, but the mornings are cold. How do I know if it is safe to paint my house if the weather is cold? Does the wood have to be a certain temperature for the paint to stick? Is there a device I can buy to let me know if the wood is too cold to paint or is there a general rule of thumb?

A: I have painted in cold weather over the years, but rarely when the temperature dropped below 40 degrees. Water-based paints tend to start thickening around 50 degrees; oil-based, when I used it, was a bit more forgiving.

I usually waited to paint on days when it was in the 50s to low 60s, with little wind so that the paint would not dry too quickly. I tried to start the job early enough so that the paint set up before dark.

The Paint Quality Institute states that most latex paints should not be applied when the air temperature of surface being painted is 35 to 50 degrees, depending on the manufacturer's recommendations on the paint label.

"Painting in cold weather is more difficult, and it takes longer to dry, leaving the wet paint more susceptible to dirt, insects and pollen," the institute says. "If you use a latex paint, wait until the temperature is predicted to remain above the recommended minimum for the next 36 hours."

There are paints that have come out since I've needed to paint in cold weather that are designed for use in northerly climates. You can search on the Internet.

Professional painters know all the tricks, and they seem to be the ones able to get away with painting in cold, as well as hot weather.

The latest I've been able to paint is



The Paint Quality Institute states that most latex paints should not be applied when the air temperature of surface being painted is 35 to 50 degrees.

Dec. 14, a rare spate of 60- and 70-degree days, in 2000 or 2001, if memory serves. Mostly, I touch up spots on week-end days that weather and time accommodate.

Pests, pests, and more pests. According to a recent survey of pest professionals in the Philadelphia area conducted by the National Pest Management Association, the two most challenging pests during the fall and winter months are stink bugs and house

mice, with fleas and silverfish a distant third and fourth, respectively. Here are some other findings:

46 percent of respondents said they had noticed an overall increase in pest populations in the Philadelphia area over the last year. Specifically, bed bugs, fleas, odorous house ants, house mice, and stink bugs.

Eastern subterranean termites, carpenter ants, carpenter bees, bed bugs, and house mice are listed as the five most destructive pests in the area.

■ ■ ■

From a recent "Ask AI" chat: I have a second home in Bucks County, Pa., that will be empty this winter.

If I empty the water lines and shut off the water is it OK for me to turn the heat off through the winter?

If so, what should I do to make sure I have no issues with the water lines if I come back for a week in January or February when the weather is really cold?

Handyguy Brian responds:

"I have a cottage I winterize. I drain all water from any pipe, trap, toilet—everything. If I have a trap I can't drain I replace the water with antifreeze made for the purpose.

"I then turn off the gas and electricity. I make sure the fridge door is open and dried out (to prevent mold). Then I place mouse poison around a few places just in case."

■ ■ ■

Every week, I do at least one chore

defined as maintenance.

This week, it was changing the filter in the furnace's whole-house air cleaner.

Why did I do all this?

With heating season here, a clean filter is key to efficient operation. Unlike my old rambler in the city, which depended on an ancient furnace converted to oil from coal in the 1940s, my current furnace is a relatively modern, high-efficiency condensing gas model that, while not totally problem-free over the last few years, needs a bit of routine TLC to work properly and efficiently.

There is nothing worse than having your furnace go down during a snowstorm in the dead of winter.

Maintenance can help prevent this nightmare.

Questions? E-mail Alan J. Heavens at atheavens@phillynews.com or write him at The Inquirer, Box 8263, Philadelphia PA 19101.

Easy No-Cook Eggnog

Your holiday visitors will be surprised when they discover that this rich and creamy eggnog requires absolutely no cooking—and you'll be happy that this no-fail treat can be ready in less than 5 minutes.

- 1 1/2 cups half-and-half
- 1 cup egg substitute
- 1 cup vanilla ice cream
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 tablespoon McCormick Pure Vanilla Extract
- 1/2 teaspoon McCormick Nutmeg, Ground
- 1/4 teaspoon McCormick Imitation

Rum Extract

1. Place all ingredients in blender container. Cover. Blend 1 minute or until well-mixed.

2. Serve immediately, or refrigerate until ready to serve. Makes 8 (1/2-cup) servings.

■ Each serving: About 128 calories, 8g fat, 9 g carbohydrate, 25mg cholesterol, 85mg sodium, 0g fiber, 5g protein.

For more holiday recipes, visit www.mccormick.com. (King Features Synd., Inc.)



Holiday Oatmeal Cookies

- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup (2 sticks) butter or margarine, softened
- 3/4 cup (packed) brown sugar
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 3 cups old-fashioned oats, uncooked
- 1 cup raisins
- 1 package (6-ounce) semisweet chocolate chips (1 cup)

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. On waxed pa-

per, combine flour, baking soda and salt.

2. In large bowl, with mixer on medium speed, beat butter and brown and granulated sugars until creamy, occasionally scraping bowl with rubber spatula. Beat in egg and vanilla. Reduce speed to low; gradually beat in flour mixture just until blended, occasionally scraping bowl. With spoon, stir in oats, raisins and chocolate chips.

3. Drop dough by heaping measuring tablespoons, 2 inches apart, on ungreased large cookie sheet. Bake cookies 13 to 15 minutes or

until tops are golden. Transfer cookies to wire racks to cool.

4. Repeat with remaining dough. Store cookies in tightly covered container at room temperature up to 1 week or in freezer up to 3 months. Makes 4 dozen cookies.

■ Each serving: About 115 calories, 6g total fat (3g saturated), 15mg cholesterol, 95mg sodium, 16g carbohydrate, 1g dietary fiber, 2g protein.

For thousands of triple-tested recipes, visit our website at www.goodhousekeeping.com/recipefinder/. Hearst Communications, Inc. All rights reserved.

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

Chocolate Chip Jumbos

These cookies are super-large and chock-full of everything -- butter, sugar, chips and nuts. You actually spoon out the batter with an ice-cream scoop! Just remember that one of these jumbos is equivalent to six regular-size cookies.

- 3 large eggs
- 1 pounds (4 sticks) butter or margarine, softened
- 1 package (16-ounce) brown sugar

- 1 1/2 cup granulated sugar
 - 2 tablespoons vanilla extract
 - 1 1/2 teaspoons baking soda
 - 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
 - 6 cups all-purpose flour
 - 2 packages (12-ounce) semisweet chocolate chips
 - 1 bag (16-ounce) chopped walnuts
1. Preheat oven to 350 F. In very large bowl, with mixer on medium speed, beat eggs 4 minutes or until light and fluffy. Reduce speed to low; beat in butter, sugars, vanilla, baking soda

and salt. Stir in flour, chocolate chips and walnuts (mixture will be very stiff).

2. Line 2 large cookie sheets with parchment paper. Drop dough by level 1/3 cups (or use 2 1/2-inch ice-cream scoop), 2 inches apart, onto prepared cookie sheets.

3. Bake cookies 23-26 minutes or until golden around the edges, rotating cookie sheets between upper and lower racks halfway through baking. Transfer cookies to wire racks to cool.

4. Repeat with remaining dough, reusing the same parchment. Store your cookies in a tightly

covered container at room temperature for up to 1 week or in the freezer up to 3 months. Makes about 3 dozen cookies.

■ Each cookie: About 425 calories, 25g total fat (11g saturated), 45mg cholesterol, 265mg sodium, 50g carbohydrate, 3g dietary fiber, 6g protein.

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Life & Style

Melanie Amaro wins 'The X Factor'

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Melanie Amaro has "The X Factor."

The powerful 19-year-old vocalist from Sunrise, Fla., won the Fox talent competition Thursday over soulful 30-year-old singer Josh Krajcik of Wooster, Ohio.

Amaro, who was mentored by judge Simon Cowell and was at one point eliminated from the contest, was awarded the grand prize: a \$5 million recording contract and a starring role in a Pepsi commercial.

"Oh my God. Oh my God. Oh my God," Amaro repeated after host Steve Jones announced her as the winner.

Despite continued prodding from Jones, Amaro couldn't quite formulate words when she was revealed to have captured the most viewer votes, and she struggled through tears to reprise Beyoncé's "Listen," the soaring song that Amaro crooned at her audition and on Wednesday's final performance round.

"I want to say, 'America, thank you for giving this girl an



In this Wednesday, Sept. 14, 2011 file image released by Fox, judges, from left, Nicole Sherzinger, Simon Cowell, Paula Abdul, and L.A. Reid attend "The X Factor" screening at the Arclight Cinerama Dome in Los Angeles.

AP

Colbert offering \$500K to pay for SC GOP primary

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP)—Comedian Stephen Colbert is offering to pay half a million dollars to help subsidize South Carolina's first-in-the-South GOP presidential primary, as state officials struggle to pay for it, but there's doubt whether it would even be legal.

The Charleston native wrote in an op-ed Thursday in The State newspaper in Columbia that Colbert Super PAC—a type of political action committee that allows him to raise unlimited amounts of money from corporations, unions and individuals—will bridge the gap after state Republicans refused to contribute anything above \$180,000 collected in candidates' filing fees.

The state Election Commission, which administers South Carolina's voting, has said it has \$1 million on hand for the primary but is short of the total \$1.5 million price tag. Spokesman Chris Whitmire says the Commission has notified budget officials the state may need to seek permission to run a deficit to fund the primary.

Colbert wrote that he of-

fered make up that \$500,000 funding gap after state Republicans ultimately turned down his proposal to pay them \$400,000 if they'd name the contest after him. Party officials have confirmed meeting with Colbert earlier this year to discuss a deal that would have renamed the balloting "The Colbert Super PAC South Carolina Republican Primary" in exchange for a check from the comedian.



Colbert

Colbert, who plays a mock conservative pundit on his TV show "The Colbert Report," says he also wanted to put a question about "corporate personhood" on the January ballot. He seized on the issue after a U.S. Supreme Court ruling eased restrictions on campaign spending by corporations.

Ultimately rebuffed by the GOP, Colbert says he started working with Democrats to get the issue on the ballot, but state Democratic Party Chairman Dick Harpootlian said Thursday that effort also fell through.

State GOP executive director Matt Moore said party officials were skeptical of Colbert

from the beginning but entertained his early communications before turning him down.

"Despite our repeatedly saying 'no,' Stephen Colbert, the comedian, seems intent on being involved," Moore said. "It's exactly why we were wary in the first place."

Regardless of the party's position, it would be up to the state whether to accept or reject any offer.

Whitmire said the question of whether a PAC can fund a South Carolina primary is a new one. If the Election Commission were presented with the money and decided to accept it, he said, they would have to ask state Attorney General Alan Wilson to decide if state law permits a political action committee to fund a primary. Colbert, who did not immediately respond to a message seeking comment, wrote that he will be spending the holidays in his native state and is open to discussions.

"The counties need the money, and Colbert Super PAC wants to give it to you; call it a Christmas Miracle," he wrote. "I'm going to be home in South Carolina over the holidays, so just give me a call. Both state parties have my contact info."

opportunity," said Cowell.

Chris Rene, the 28-year-old singer-rapper from Santa Cruz, Calif., came in third place.

Before the winner was unveiled, the three finalists crooned classic Christmas tunes, and Justin Bieber, Ste-

vie Wonder, Leona Lewis, Pitbull, Ne-Yo and 50 Cent performed various songs with former contestants. Amaro and Krajcik also dueted on David Bowie's "Heroes."

Unlike "American Idol," the contest was open to both solo

singers and groups, and had a lower minimum age of 12 and no upper age limit.

The judges also served as mentors. Cowell represented female vocalists, including Amaro; L.A. Reid headed male singers, including Rene; Nicole Scherzinger was in charge of over-30 singers, including Krajcik; and Paula Abdul helmed the groups.

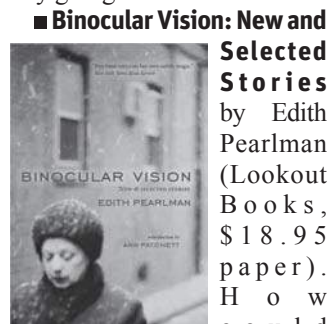
Best books of 2011

By DAVID L. ULIN
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Of all the books I read this year, here—alphabetically by title—are my 10 favorites, those that most stuck with me, that reframed how I think about the world.

■ **1Q84** by Haruki Murakami (Alfred A. Knopf, \$30.50). Murakami's magnum opus more than lives up to its billing, immersing us in a slightly altered universe to tell what is, in the end, the most traditional of stories: Boy gets girl, boy loses girl, boy gets girl.

■ **Binocular Vision: New and Selected Stories** by Edith Pearlman (Lookout Books, \$18.95 paper). How could



I have not known of Edith Pearlman? The author of three previous books of short fiction, she writes like the literary love child of Alice Munro and Deborah Eisenberg: piercing, subtle, and so pointed that every one of the 34 stories in this collection cannot help but break your heart.

■ **The Ecstasy of Influence: Nonfictions, Etc.** by Jonathan Lethem (Doubleday, \$27.95). Inspired by Norman Mailer's *Advertisements for Myself*, this is Lethem's homage to the inner life. Intentionally baggy, moving back and forth from subject to subject, time period to time period, it works because of its relentless sense of influence, its understanding that the art and literature and music we love not only inspire us but in a very real way make us who we are.

■ **The Information: A History, a Theory, a Flood** by James Gleick (Pantheon, \$29.95). The information age, Gleick tells us in this magnificent history of data and how we interact with it, did not begin with the computer; rather, it started the first time we sought to interpret our world. Connecting a dizzying array of topics, from the telegraph to talking drums, theoretical mathematics to the library of Alexandria, this elegant, insightful study reminds us that we have always been adrift in an incomprehensible universe.

■ **Otherwise Known as the Human Condition: Selected Essays and Reviews** by Geoff Dyer (Graywolf, \$18 paper). Perhaps the finest critical essayist working, Dyer takes us on a tour of his enthusiasms: jazz, literature, photography, house music, history. What links this material? Nothing, except for his erudite and idiosyncratic intelligence, and a voice as smooth as any that's in print.

■ **Out of the Vinyl Deeps: Ellen Willis on Rock Music**, edited by Nona Willis Aronowitz (University of Minnesota Press, \$22.95 paper). Willis—who died in 2006 at age 64—was a trailblazer, one of the early female rock writers and the first pop music critic at the New Yorker. This collection, which gathers 59 of her pieces, showcases her fierce intelligence and her political and cultural engagement as well as her recognition of the abiding contradictions of the music that she loved.

■ **Stone Arabia** by Dana Spiotta (Scribner, \$24). On the surface, this novel—which revolves around a middle-aged

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wannabe rocker and his fantasies of stardom—appears to be about the lies we tell ourselves. Its genius, though, resides in the way Spiotta turns that idea around on us, revealing her protagonist's dreams as more authentic than his daily existence, highlighting the at-times unbridgeable gap between imagination and reality.

■ **Train Dreams** by Denis Johnson (FSG, \$18). A nearly perfect short novel from the most essential writer of his generation: the story of a laborer in the rural West, and his journey—physical, emotional, spiritual and even mystical—through the first half of the 20th century.

■ **A Widow's Story: A Memoir** by Joyce Carol Oates (Ecco, \$27.99). I've never been an Oates fan particularly, but this memoir—a close, almost claustrophobic portrait of the months after her husband's sudden death from pneumonia—is exquisite, expertly and desperately parsing the landscape of grief and loss, while never once flinching or looking away.

■ **You Think That's Bad: Stories** by Jim Shepard (Alfred A. Knopf, \$24.95). Shepard is a short-fiction master, and here he pushes into new territory, giving us 11 stories about characters at the end of their endurance: contradictory, foolishly brave (or bravely foolish), clinging to hope beyond the point that hope is any longer a reasonable alternative.



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Finnish police detain Lambert after bar brawl

HELSINKI (AP)—Finnish police say they detained Adam Lambert after he assaulted people who tried to break up a fight between the former “American Idol” star and his boyfriend in

downtown Helsinki.

Detective Superintendent Petri Juvonen said the fight spread from a popular gay bar early Thursday into the street where Lambert was suspected of hit-

ting two people who tried to break it up.

Juvonen said that Lambert’s boyfriend, “Finnish Big Brother” star Sauli Koskinen, also was held for questioning. He said no

weapons were used, no one was seriously hurt and that it was not “a very serious incident.”

Police said the two men were released after a few hours and that no further action would be taken.

Report: Pop star healthy, home for Christmas

VIENNA (AP)—Austria’s state broadcaster says British pop star George Michael has been released from a Vienna hospital and will be able to celebrate Christmas at home.



Michael

The 48-year-old was being treated for pneumonia. Broadcaster ORF says he was released Thursday

morning from the AKH hospital and is catching a flight to London later in the day.

A woman answering the hospital phone said she could not comment due to confidentiality laws.

The former front man for the pop group “Wham” was hospitalized late last month after canceling a performance in the Austrian capital.

Who would first lady be in next life? Bo the dog

WASHINGTON (AP)—Michelle Obama would come back as Bo. Not just any dog, but Bo the dog.

In a television interview, the first lady was asked what person or thing she would want to come back as when she dies. She named her family’s Portu-

guese water dog.

“He’s got a great life,” she told ABC News’ Barbara Walters.

President Barack Obama took a pass on the question, one in a series the first couple faced for an upcoming holiday TV special.

Asked when he tells lies, the

president said only in personal interactions with family members, such as when commenting on how someone looks in a particular dress.

As for his biggest pet peeve about his wife, the president said he had none. She said of him: “My list is too long.”

Apple’s late boss Steve Jobs to receive Grammy

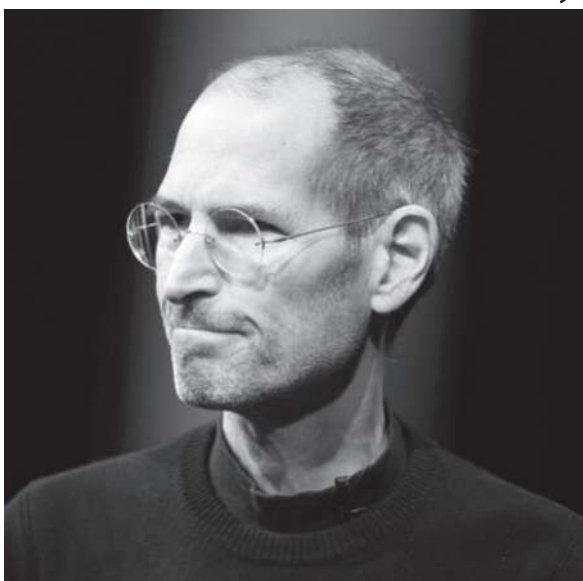
LOS ANGELES (AP)—Apple co-founder Steve Jobs is receiving a posthumous Grammy for his technological innovations in the arts.

Jobs is among a dozen people, music groups or companies receiving honorary awards Feb. 11, the day before the Grammys. He died of cancer in October.

The Grammys are honoring Jobs with one of the group’s Trustees Awards, citing the late Apple boss’ advancements that “transformed the way we consume music, TV, movies, and books.”

Grammy organizers called him a “creative visionary” for Apple Inc. innovations that include the iPod, iPhone and iPad.

Others receiving honorary awards the day before the Grammys include Diana Ross, the Allman Brothers, Glen Campbell, Antonio Carlos Jobim, George Jones, the Memphis Horns and recording engineer Rudy Van Gelder.



In this June 6, 2011 file photo, Apple CEO Steve Jobs is shown during a keynote address to the Apple Worldwide Developers Conference in San Francisco.

Wife demurs advances made by men reconnecting online

By **ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: I have been happily married for more than 20 years. I joined an online social network to keep in touch with family, friends and my kids who are in college. I love the convenience, but I’m in a quandary.

A number of men from my past (some I dated and some not) have contacted me online with their phone numbers and asked me to call them. I was flattered at first, but now I think phone communication would be inviting trouble.

I politely inform friends who push the issue that I’m happy to catch up online, but out of respect for my husband and my marriage I don’t call men who send me their numbers. Most of them then drop further attempts at communication; others do not.

My problem is it continues to happen. I don’t remember being that popular when I was young, so it has caught me off guard. I suspended my account several times, but reactivated it because I miss the connection with extended family and friends.

I’m getting turned off to responding to any “friend” requests anymore because it seems that most men just want to recapture some youthful fantasy. How do I handle this?

BLAST FROM THE PAST

DEAR BLAST: You are handling it very well just the way you are.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My boyfriend, “Ian,” and I are in our 30s. Although we have been together for seven months, his family is not yet over his ex-wife. They invite her for dinner, share weekend visitation with Ian’s daughter with her, and remind him constantly that they are disappointed with his decision.

Ian has moved on. He would like to cut all ties with his ex, but his family won’t allow it. He’s afraid if he puts his foot down it will destroy the already strained relationship he has with them.

My family accepts Ian, but his refuses to admit I exist. How do we deal with this? It’s Ian’s life, and he has the right to choose who he spends it with.

INVISIBLE WOMAN IN PHILLY

DEAR INVISIBLE WOMAN: Toughen up, grit your teeth and continue the relationship. Remember, because a child is involved, Ian cannot completely move on. As for his parents, accept that their grandchild’s mother will always be a part of their lives so get used to it. If this romance leads to the altar, you will meet Ian’s family at some point.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My friend “Cailin” is very sensitive and not very accepting. She’s also unforgiving and tends to get into stupid arguments about nothing. Since the sixth grade it has gotten even worse.

There is a new girl in school who seems to be a really nice, friendly person. Cailin was the first one to meet her and she wouldn’t let anyone else sit with them.

I told my mom about it and she said to just sit down with them both. Today I did what my mom said to do. When Cailin saw us together, she was steaming. She ignored me for the rest of the day.

I don’t want to keep the new girl, just share her. Why can’t Cailin and I both be friends with her? Is there any way I could talk to her? I’m considering talking to the dean of students. Would this be OK?

SHARING FRIENDS IN COLORADO

DEAR SHARING FRIENDS: Cailin is immature, insecure and possessive. She’s afraid that if the new girl talks to other people, the girl will no longer like and depend on her. That’s why she was angry when you sat down with them.

By all means discuss this with the dean of students. The dean may have a solution that will allow the new girl a chance to make friends with more of her classmates—including you.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in “What Every Teen Should Know.” To order, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Lawyers for Sheen’s ex-wife fear media frenzy

ASPEN, Colo. (AP)—Attorneys for Charlie Sheen’s ex-wife want to stop what they expect to be a media frenzy when she appears in court on drug and assault charges. Attorneys asked a judge to deny a live Internet feed from the courtroom requested by TMZ Productions when Brooke Mueller appears on Jan. 23. The 34-year-old Mueller faces a felony charge of possession of cocaine with intent to distribute and a misdemeanor assault charge. She was arrested Dec. 3 after a woman reported being assaulted at a nightclub. The Aspen Times reported that police found between four and five grams of cocaine when they contacted Mueller. Sheen and Mueller divorced earlier this year after Sheen was arrested on suspicion of assaulting her in 2009. He completed his probation in November 2010.

Kid Rock, Detroit church donate gifts to needy

DETROIT (AP)—Kid Rock is teaming up with a Detroit church to give away hundreds of gift baskets and retail gift certificates to needy families in the area where he got his start and still calls home. The musician’s nonprofit organization joined Hartford Memorial Baptist Church on Wednesday to distribute 100 gift certificates for Meijer retail and grocery stores, along with more than 300 gift baskets. Kid Rock, who was born Robert Ritchie, grew up and lives in suburban Detroit. He and the Kid Rock Foundation have been honored this year for their philanthropic contributions by Goodfellows Detroit and the NAACP’s Detroit branch. Kid Rock is known for dabbling in various musical styles, from hip-hop and hard rock to country and Southern rock.

Mindy McCready’s mom wants grandson back in Fla.

FORT MYERS, Fla. (AP)—The mother of country singer Mindy McCready wants her grandson back. Gayle Inge and her husband, Michael Inge, said Thursday in a news release that their 5-year-old grandson Zander should be returned to them in Florida. Under Florida law, Inge is Zander’s legal guardian. In November, McCready took the boy out of Florida without the permission of Florida’s courts. The singer and her son were found in Arkansas. McCready told The Associated Press that she took the boy because she feared he was being abused at her mother’s home; Gayle Inge has denied the allegations. Zander is currently in the custody of Arkansas child welfare authorities. The Inges say Arkansas shouldn’t have jurisdiction over the case and that being away from his Florida family isn’t in the boy’s best interest.

Police get warrant in Atlanta rapper killing

ATLANTA (AP)—Atlanta police say they have an arrest warrant for a man in the killing of rapper Slim Dunkin, who was gunned down in a city music studio as he was preparing to record a video. Police identified the man they’re seeking as 28-year-old Vinson Hardimon, a rapper known as Young Vito. Police Maj. Keith Meadows said the 24-year-old Slim Dunkin, whose real name was Mario Hamilton, was shot to death in the chest Friday after getting into an argument with another person that evening. He was taken to a city hospital where he was pronounced dead. Police are urging Hardimon to turn himself in because they have reason to believe he may be in danger.

John Chamberlain, made art from scrap, dies in NYC

NEW YORK (AP)—An artist known for turning automotive scrap metal into sculpture has died in New York City. John Chamberlain was 84. The Gagosian Gallery represented Chamberlain and says he died Wednesday in Manhattan. Chamberlain’s career spanned decades. He started working with junked car metal in the late 1950s, gaining admirers and critics. He also worked with materials as wide-ranging as paper bags, aluminum foil and foam rubber. Chamberlain’s work has been exhibited all over the world. His first retrospective was at the city’s Guggenheim Museum in 1971. The Guggenheim announced earlier this month another retrospective of his work will be on exhibit from February to May of next year. The exhibit will include 95 of Chamberlain’s works from throughout his career.

Hollywood dialect coach Robert Easton dies at 81

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Character actor and Hollywood dialect coach Robert Easton, whose successes include teaching Forest Whitaker to speak like Idi Amin in the 2006 movie “The Last King of Scotland,” has died in Los Angeles. He was 81. Daughter Heather Woodruff Perry tells the Los Angeles Times that Easton died of natural causes on Monday at his home in the San Fernando Valley. His movie credits include “Paint Your Wagon,” “Pete’s Dragon,” “Pet Sematary II” and “Primary Colors.” When he was younger, he mainly played country bumpkins on TV shows because of his Southern drawl. He feared being typecast so he worked on different accents and learned he could mimic regional speech patterns. As a dialect coach, he worked Arnold Schwarzenegger, Charlton Heston, Liam Neeson, Anne Hathaway and Robert Duvall.

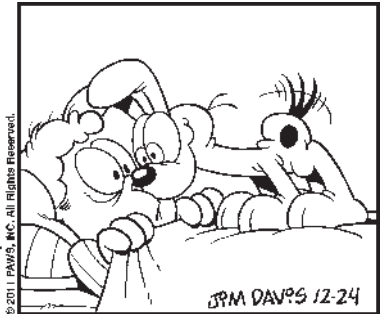
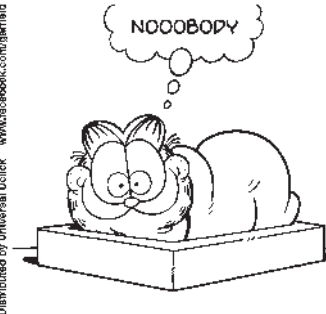
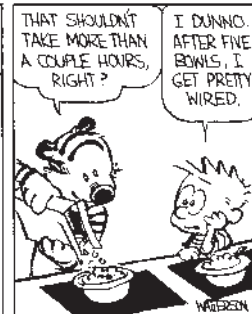
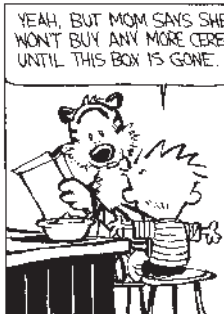
Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

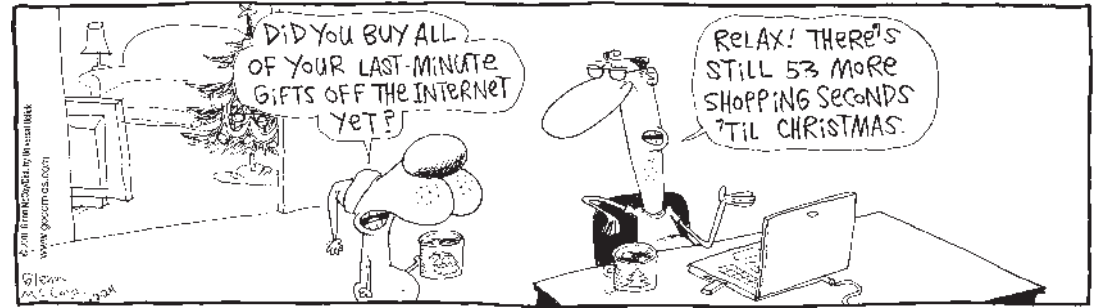
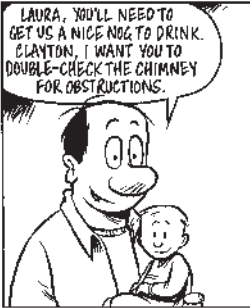


Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Dandy
4 Unkempt one
8 Hourglass filler
12 Tramcar load
13 Pocket bread
14 Lotion additive
15 Work with
16 Den
17 Come in last
18 It has its ups and downs
21 "Of course"
22 Sine-non link
23 Robin Hood
26 Moon-shine vessel
27 Hem's partner
30 Wheedle
31 "Ulalume" author
32 Software prototype
33 Intimide
34 Poke
35 Sly critters

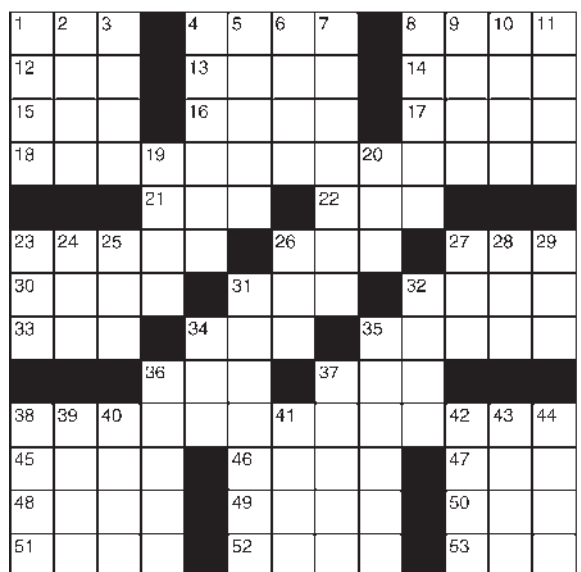
DOWN

36 Barracks bed
37 Off-tattooed word
38 Contests on oval track
45 Sandwich treat
46 Tittle
47 Color
48 Herbie of jazz
49 Peak
50 Meadow
51 Otherwise
52 "South Park" kid
53 Superlative ending

2 Roughly
3 Rind
4 Ill will
5 Perjurers
6 Ear-related
7 Suggesting
8 Taco
9 Oodles
10 Schnozz
11 Antelope's playmate
12 Short-tailed wildcat
13 Summer mo.
14 Govt. media monitor
15 Deviate off course
16 "Finding Nemo" fish
17 voiced by Ellen DeGeneres
18 Enjoying some time off
19 Spud's buds
20 Member-ship

Solution time: 27 mins.

Yesterday's answer 12-24



STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99c per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Ryan Seacrest, 37; Stephenie Meyer, 38; Ricky Martin, 40; Diedrich Bader, 45.

Happy Birthday: Pull your thoughts and ideas together and see what you come up with. Using what you have will enable you to lower your overhead and lessen stress. You can think big, but you must take baby steps to reach your goals. Don't let uncertainties stand in your way. Overcome obstacles by finding simpler routes to reach your destination. Your numbers are 2, 10, 18, 23, 38, 42, 44.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Think about what you are going to do or say before you begin. A disagreement over money may arise if you feel you are worth more than you have been given. Negotiate diplomatically if you want to come out ahead. ★★

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You'll get a vote of confidence from your peers. Enjoy the festivities going on around you and use this opportunity to network with someone who can influence your future. Your timing is good when dealing with business, not so good with personal matters. ★★★★★

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Spread a little love and joy around. The more you interact with friends, the more secure you will feel about who you are, what you have accomplished and what's yet to come. Look at the big picture and outline your year ahead. ★★★

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Negotiations or financial dealings should be settled, if at all possible. What you leave

for next year will not move forward successfully until at least the middle of the year. The decision is yours. Act now or prepare to wait. ★★★

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Travel and dealing with peers will not run smoothly. Don't make an impulsive decision based on what you hear and see. You are best to take a wait-and-see approach to whatever you face. A business arrangement is not as it appears. ★★★

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You'll have ample opportunity to make a good choice and to meet someone who interests you personally. Don't let frustration cause you to miss an event geared toward professional advancement or making a business connection. ★★★★★

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Follow your head when dealing with peers and your heart when dealing with love. Refrain from being chintzy or putting a price on love. An investment you make is likely to be over budget, but it will make someone happy. ★★★★★

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): The past will come back to haunt you if you visit old familiar places. Don't regret what has happened; it's the present and the future that count. Look beyond the pressures of the holiday season and play for the long run. ★★★

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Travel plans may be delayed. Remain calm and avoid getting into an argument with anyone who is overreacting to a situation that arises. Focus on home and family and on making changes that will bring you all closer together. ★★★

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Positive changes at home will make the holiday season that much better. Your keen sense of what works and what doesn't will lead to greater benefits as the year ends. Hosting an event will put you in the spotlight. ★★★

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Let your charm lead the way. Talking to someone you work with or for will help you secure your position or contracts. Greater personal stability will develop if you address mistakes and move forward. ★★★

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): A positive attitude will enhance your chance to get ahead. Don't overdo it when it comes to food, drink or spending money. Moderation will keep you on the right track and position you well for future opportunities. ★★★★★

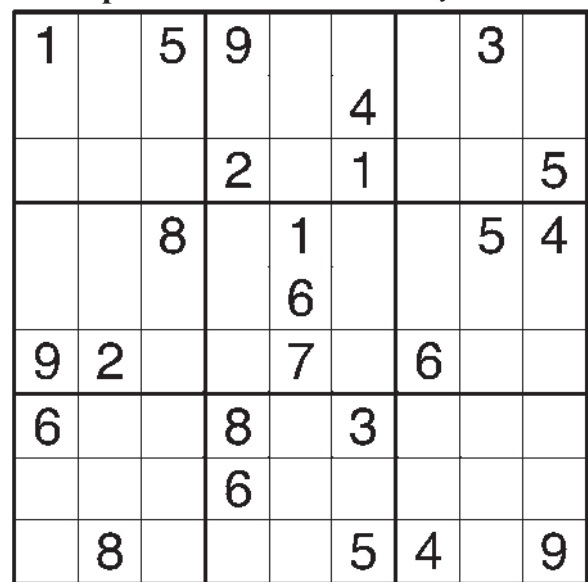
Birthday Baby: You are impressive, outgoing and charming. You face challenges head-on.

Eugenia's Web sites: eugenialast.com for confidential consultations, myspace.com/eugenialast for Eugenia's blog, astroadvice.com for fun

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green



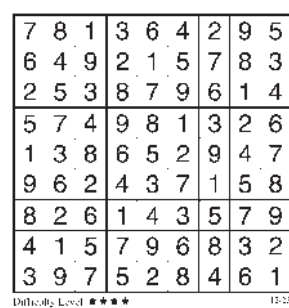
Difficulty Level ★★★★★

12/24

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer



Difficulty Level ★★★★★

12/24

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

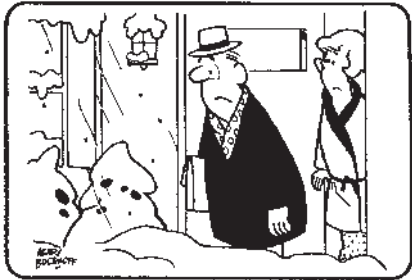
THE STATUE OF LIBERTY IS 125 YEARS OLD Solution: 5 letters



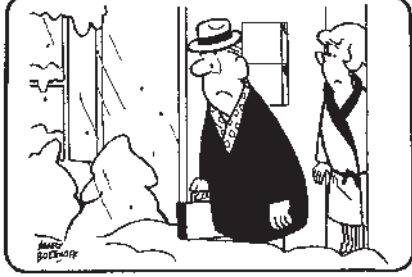
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Balcony, Bartholdi, Base, Bell, Boat, Bronze, Clay, Copper, Dreams, Elevator, Ellis, Female, Ferry, Figure, Frame, France, Freedom, Friendship, Gown, Harbor, Height, Historic, Honor, Hope, Icon, Landmark, Liberty Island, Museum, New Jersey, Parade, Peace, Pedestal, Plaques, Restore, Robed, Shipped, Stands, Star, Steps, Symbol, Tablet, Torch, Tour, Visitors
Yesterday's Answer: Massive

HOCUS-FOCUS BY HENRY BOLTIHOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.

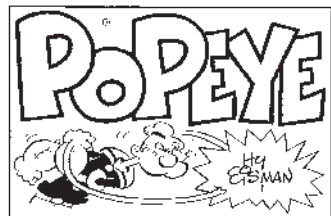


Differences: 1. Nightgown is striped. 2. Hat is different. 3. Spots on bushes are gone. 4. Light is missing. 5. Window is different. 6. Briefcase is different.

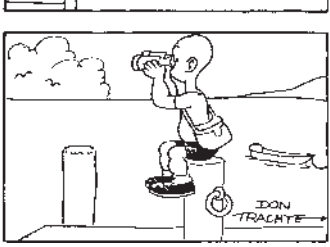
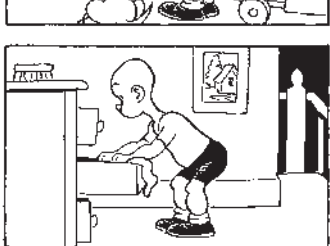
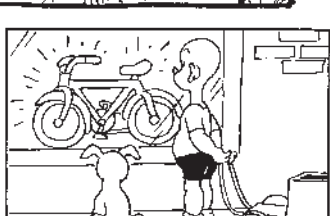
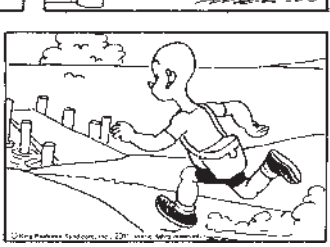
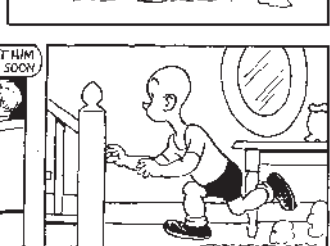
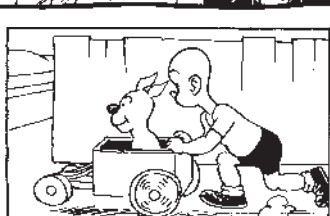
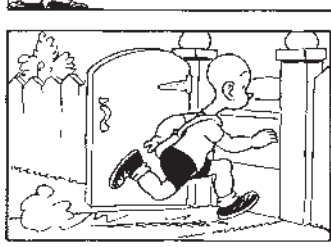
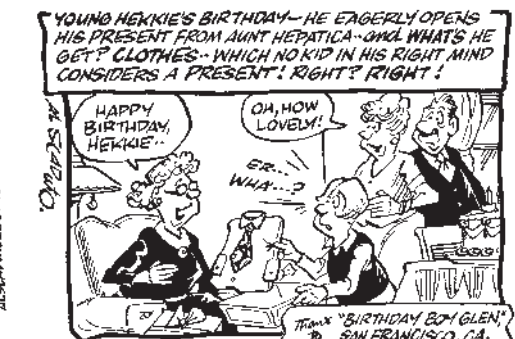
Wishing Well®

6	3	2	5	3	6	8	6	7	4	2	8	7
N	M	L	C	O	O	G	W	B	E	O	I	E
3	6	5	3	6	2	5	6	3	7	5	7	4
D	C	R	E	O	O	E	N	R	C	A	O	X
6	4	6	3	5	6	7	2	3	8	3	4	7
T	P	E	A	T	N	M	K	T	V	E	E	P
3	6	7	3	4	3	5	7	4	2	6	8	6
D	T	A	E	C	S	I	S	T	T	E	E	D
7	4	5	8	3	7	3	8	2	5	3	4	8
S	C	V	T	I	I	R	O	O	E	E	H	O
7	4	5	7	3	5	4	5	2	7	5	8	7
O	A	P	N	S	E	N	R	S	A	I	T	T
7	8	5	4	8	5	8	4	2	4	2	2	
H	E	E	O	G	R	D	S	E	E	S	L	F

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

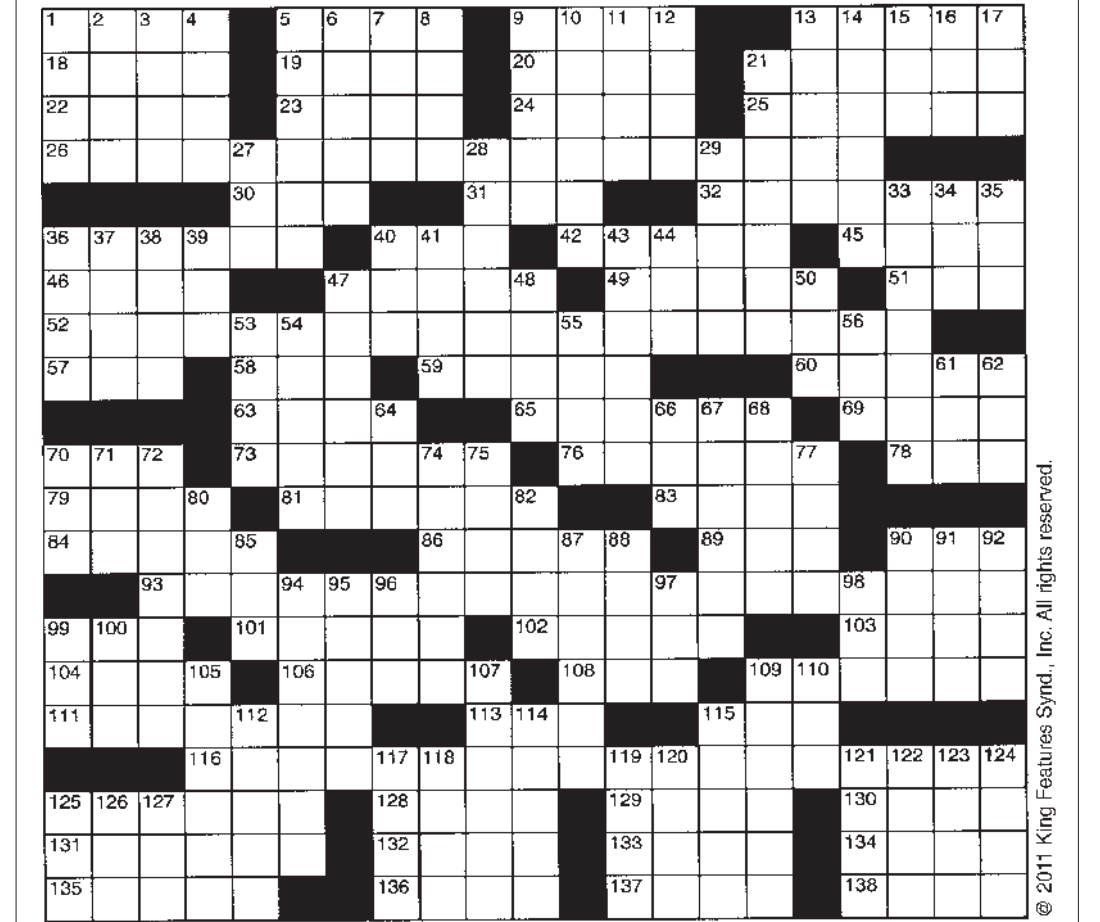


They'll Do It Every Time by Al Scaduto



Super Crossword GIFT RAP

- ACROSS
- 1 Forum wear
- 5 Wolf gang?
- 9 Drive the getaway car
- 13 Positive thinker
- 18 Lipinski leap
- 19 DeeJay Freed
- 20 Interoffice communique
- 21 Hickman or Strawberry
- 22 Canadian coin
- 23 Ordinary
- 24 "Trinity" author
- 25 Kind of paint
- 26 Start of a remark by Don Marquis
- 30 Narcs' org.
- 31 "Agnes"
- 32 Cinema sled
- 36 Lineman's tool
- 40 Seville shout
- 42 Renown
- 45 Debut recording
- 46 Atmosphere
- 47 Discontinue
- 49 Sharpens a skill
- 51 Choose, with "for"
- 52 Part 2 of remark
- 57 Cartoon canine
- 58 Part 3 of remark
- 59 Delany and Wynter
- 60 Time of your life
- 63 Head line?
- 65 Susann or Shakespeare
- 69 Entreaty
- 70 Mrs. Eddie Cantor
- 73 Prom date
- 76 Gulliver's first name
- 78 Portly
- 79 Wattle's partner
- 81 Speculation
- 83 Conductor Klemperer
- 84 Gold brick?
- 86 Pageant prop
- 89 Part 4 of remark
- 90 Sixth sense
- 93 Part 5 of remark
- 99 Mellow
- 101 Studio sign
- 102 "— Breath You Take"
- 103 Computer image
- 104 Man the bar
- 106 Belarusian city
- 108 Cote cutie
- 109 Bantered
- 111 November 11th
- 113 Stirrup site
- 115 Create a chemise
- 116 End of remark
- 125 Monastery bigwigs
- 128 Tivoli's Villa d'—
- 129 Neighbor of Can.
- 130 Concept
- 131 He had things done by Friday
- 132 — breve
- 133 Unusual
- 134 It's nothing
- 135 Off the plate
- 136 Basketball's Willis
- 137 Black
- 138 Seth's son
- 6 Maui greeting
- 7 Poirot's concern
- 8 Handle
- 9 Tickle
- 10 Wodehouse's Wooster
- 11 Send out
- 12 Peter of reggae
- 13 Dieter's discomfort
- 14 Cleared the slate
- 15 Cardigan part
- 16 Pipe cleaner?
- 17 Building wing
- 21 Signifies
- 27 HST's predecessor
- 28 Crusader kingdom
- 29 Persian, presently
- 33 Early epic
- 34 Ref
- 35 Speck
- 36 Talk-show pioneer
- 37 Mechanic's offering
- 38 Pressing need
- 39 — de Cologne
- 40 Above, to Arnold
- 41 Installed tile
- 43 Unsullied
- 44 — Gatos, CA
- 47 Basilica
- 48 Italian rumbler
- 50 Diffident
- 53 Kind
- 54 Use a toboggan
- 55 Handle harshly
- 56 "Alley —"
- 61 Indian export
- 62 Toque or topee
- 64 Piggy
- 66 Medical grp.
- 67 Upstart
- 68 Price twice
- 70 Infamous
- 71 Singer
- 72 Enhance
- 74 Generator parts
- 75 Stumble
- 77 Isolated
- 80 Tropical snake
- 82 Connecticut campus
- 85 Spinks stat
- 87 Go back
- 88 "— Good Men"
- 90 Decorate glass
- 91 Oxford, e.g.
- 92 Await judgment
- 94 As a group
- 95 Canvas cover?
- 96 Nuremberg numeral
- 97 Cinnabar, for instance
- 98 "— the season ..."
- 99 Wilderness trans.
- 100 "Holy smoke!"
- 105 Unseat
- 107 Pot
- 109 Dairy cow
- 110 Be obligated
- 112 Boca —, FL
- 114 Winning
- 115 Burning bit
- 117 Have on
- 118 Presque —, ME
- 119 Mata —
- 120 Dash
- 121 — up (evaluate)
- 122 Actress Barbara
- 123 Sleuth Wolfe
- 124 New Mexico resort
- 125 Parker of football
- 126 It may be padded
- 127 Except



1. LANGUAGE: From what language are all the modern Romance languages derived?
2. SCIENCE: What term describes the lowest point in a satellite orbiting the Earth?
3. HISTORY: When did Labor Day become a federal holiday in the United States?

4. INVENTIONS: What was Eli Whitney's most famous invention?
5. GOVERNMENT: In what year was the U.S. Constitution ratified?
6. GEOGRAPHY: What nation calls itself Espana in its native tongue?

7. ANCIENT WORLD: Where did the Minoan culture flourish?
8. POETRY: Who wrote the poem called "The Waste Land"?

9. MUSIC: What Beatles' album features the songs "Rocky Raccoon" and "Helter Skelter"?
10. MEASUREMENTS: How many pints are in a quart?

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1. Latin
2. Perigee
3. 1894
4. Cotton gin
5. 1789
6. Spain
7. Crete
8. T.S. Eliot
9. "The Beatles" (The White Album)
10. Two



The Spats by Jeff Pickering



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CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

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Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 6-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as \$27 for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of the packages below.

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• 3-Liner	\$15	\$27
• 5-Liner	\$24	\$39
• 3-Liner with picture	\$24	\$42
• 5-Liner with picture	\$36	\$57

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday Issue:
■ All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the Saipan Tribune are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, through its Chairwoman of the Board, is hereby giving notice that the Regular Meeting of the Board is scheduled on Tuesday, December 27, 2011 at 10:00 a.m. at the NMHC Conference Room, Garapan, Saipan. The public is welcome to submit written or oral comments regarding the agenda below. Individuals interested in attending the meeting and needing special accommodations are requested to contact NMHC in advance.

- I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS**
 - a. Call to Order
 - b. Roll Call
 - c. Adoption of Agenda
 - d. Adoption on Minutes: November 3, 2011 Regular Board Meeting
November 21, 2011 Regular Board Meeting
- II. PUBLIC COMMENTS**
- III. CORPORATE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**
 - a. USDA RD SUTA Update
 - b. Financial & Compliance Audit For FY2011 & FY2012 Intend to Award Update
 - c. Administrative Matters: Personnel & Budget—FY2012
- IV. MORTGAGE CREDIT PROGRAM**
 - a. Deferment Agreement (HOME Funds)
 - b. Lease to Own Agreement (Foreclosed Upon Properties)
 - c. Purchase Proposal- Lot No. 003 D 16
 - d. Update on NMHC-Owned Properties through Auction
 - e. Other Loan Matters- REOs for Approved Home Loan Clients
 - f. All Loan Programs - Performing/Delinquency over 30 days & Litigation Report as of November 30, 2011
 - g. Chart for all Delinquency Report as of November 30, 2011
 - h. Wells Fargo Loan Assignment
- V. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS**
 - a. CDBG Update
- VI. PROGRAM & HOUSING**
 - a. Program and Housing Division Update
- VII. FISCAL AFFAIRS**
 - a. FY 2012 Financial Statement as of November 30, 2011
- VIII. FIELD REPORT**
 - a. Tinian Field Office Reports – Section 8 & Voucher Program Status Report
 - b. Rota Field Office Reports – Section 8 & Voucher Program Status Report
- IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION**
- X. OTHER MATTERS**
 - a. Request For proposal For Garapan Annex
- XI. ADJOURNMENT**

(Note: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a) (7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session.)

MARCIE M. TOMOKANE
Chairwoman of the Board

MICHAEL A. WHITE, ESQ. F0122
THE LAW OFFICES OF MICHAEL A. WHITE, LLC
POST OFFICE BOX 5222
SAIPAN, MARIANA ISLANDS 96950
TEL: (670) 234-6547
FAX: (670) 234-9537

ATTORNEYS FOR Plaintiff

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN
MARIANA ISLANDS

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION, Plaintiff,	CIVIL ACTION NO. 11-0036
-v-	NOTICE OF SALE
JOSE I. KAPILEO, Defendant.	

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to Order issued by the Court in this matter on November 7, 2011, I will sell, at public auction, to the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all the right, title, and interest of Defendant in and to the following property: Lot No. 0051129, situated in Koblerville, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, containing an area of 1,104 square meters, more or less, as shown on Cadastral Plat No. 005110, the original of which was registered with the Land Registry as Document No. 16702 on March 11, 1982, the description therein being incorporated herein by reference.

Date, Time, and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on Friday, December 30, 2011, at the hour of 1:30 p.m., at The Law Offices of Michael A. White, LLC, Joeten Center, Susupe, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. The sale will be open to the general public.

Terms and Conditions of Sale. The Terms and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the undersigned, either prior to or at the sale. These terms and conditions shall govern the conduct of the sale.

DATED, this 16th day of November, 2011:

/s/ MICHAEL A. WHITE, Auctioneer

FOR RENT - RESIDENTIAL

Lower Navy Hill Apts. Newly renovated bldg., 3BR & 2BTH. Rooms w/A/C & fully furnished. Back-up generator. Free Wi-Fi, EPA Solar Water Heater. Laundry area. Nighttime security. 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

Ocean View Terraces. Luxury 2BR & 1BTH Apts w/private balcony & beautiful view. Rooms w/A/C & Fully Furnished. Back-up Generator. Free Wi-Fi. Laundry Area. Nighttime security. 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

Sunset View Terraces. Luxury 2BR & 1BTH Apts w/private balcony & beautiful view. Rooms w/A/C & Fully Furnished. Back-up Generator. Free Wi-Fi. Laundry Area. Nighttime security. 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

Fina Sisu Apt., 2-BR, 1-BTH, FF, AC, BU Genset/24-hr water, security, laundry room, free Wi-Fi & ample parking. Right behind NMC campus. MIHA applicants accepted. Special rates for NMC faculty/students. Call 235-6527/8 or 285-1317 for info.

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Colts get past Houston for 2nd straight win



INDIANAPOLIS (AP)— Reggie Wayne will always remember Thursday night's catch.

The man with the expiring contract caught a 1-yard touchdown pass from Dan Orlovsky with 19 seconds left, giving the Colts their only lead of the game in a 19-16 victory over AFC South champion Houston 19-16.

It's the second straight win for the Colts (2-13), who will now have to fight off St. Louis and Minnesota for the No. 1 overall draft pick. Orlovsky, who played the last two seasons with Houston, also won his second straight game after losing his first nine NFL starts.

"Reggie certainly had a spectacular game. Caught it well, was active in the running, just all around a terrific game," Colts coach Jim Caldwell said.

Houston was in a position to come to Indianapolis and simply tune up for the postseason.

Not a chance.

The Texans looked anything but playoff-ready. They settled for two field goals in the red zone, didn't convert a third down until getting a lucky bounce late in the fourth quarter, its running game was stymied late and the defense helped the Colts with three penalties on the decisive drive.

Houston (11-4) is now 0-10 in Indianapolis and still hunting for a first-round bye. The Texans still haven't scored more than 20 points in a game since Nov. 27.

When Brian Cushing broke through the line on the game's first play, sacking Orlovsky and stripping the ball, it looked like it might be a replica of the teams' first meeting, a 34-7 blowout. Arian Foster ran for 8 yards on the next play, then scored on a 9-yard burst off the left side to give Houston a 7-0 lead.

Foster carried 23 times for 158 yards but repeatedly stopped the Texans' runners in the red zone.

"We didn't turn the ball over nearly as much as we did in that (first) game," Caldwell said. "But beyond that, I think we were pretty good at protecting the ball. I think our defense played extremely well even though they ran for 171 yards. It was kind of a bend but don't break defense, but when they had to stop them in the red zone, they stopped them in the red zone."

Nobody got into the end zone again until Orlovsky took the Colts 78 yards in the final two minutes, thanks in part to three costly Houston penalties, two of them



Indianapolis Colts' Reggie Wayne makes a catch in front of Houston Texans' Kareem Jackson during the fourth quarter of an NFL football game Thursday, Dec. 22, 2011, in Indianapolis.

against rookie defensive end J.J. Watt. After a pass interference call against Glover Quinn put the ball at the Texans 1, Orlovsky lobbed the ball into the corner of the end zone and Wayne beat the coverage to make the catch.

"All in all, it was a great team win," Caldwell said. "When the offense needed a drive, we got it. When we needed a field goal we got it. When we needed a stop we got it."

Orlovsky was 23 of 41 for 244 yards with the one TD. Joseph Addai ran 19 times for 59 yards.

T.J. Yates wound up 13 of 16 for 132 yards in a return to his hometown.

And this one go down as the final home game for not only Wayne and Orlovsky,

but also key Colts cornerstones such as Jeff Saturday and Robert Mathis - and possibly even Peyton Manning, though Colts owner Jim Irsay told NFL Network that if Peyton Manning plays in 2012, it will be in Indianapolis.

"If the situation is where he's back and he's healthy, then I see him coming back and playing here," Irsay said before the game. "I think there is a lot of speculation about the draft pick and those sorts of things, but I think what you have to realize is this—is the likes of Peyton Manning going to be seen again? It is not coming, if ever, for a very, very long time. You're not going to go in this draft or the next draft and get another Peyton Manning."

Beltran, Cardinals agree to 2-year contract



ST. LOUIS (AP)— Carlos Beltran and the World Series champion St. Louis

Cardinals agreed to a two-year contract pending results of a physical, a move that would fortify the team's lineup following the departure of Albert Pujols.

The team disclosed the agreement Thursday night and said it expects to make a formal announcement shortly after the holidays.

KMOX, the Cardinals' flagship radio station, reported the deal is for \$26 million over two years - the same figure cited by a person familiar with the negotiations who spoke to The Associated Press. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because financial details of the agreement were not announced by the team.

The 34-year-old Beltran batted .300 with 22 home runs, 84 RBIs and a .385 on-base percentage for the New York Mets and San Francisco Giants this year. He likely will

be the opening-day right fielder for the Cardinals next season. Lance Berkman is expected to move to first base, taking Pujols' spot.

Beltran and Berkman are switch-hitters, giving new manager Mike Matheny lineup flexibility.

Earlier this month, St. Louis re-signed shortstop Rafael Furcal to a two-year, \$14 million contract and added left-handed reliever J.C. Romero with a one-year, \$750,000 deal. The Cardinals appear to need only a few spare parts to finalize the roster.

After Pujols signed a \$254 million, 10-year contract with the Los Angeles Angels, Cardinals chairman Bill DeWitt Jr. said he expected his team's payroll to perhaps exceed this year's total of \$110 million.

Allen Craig, coming off an impressive postseason, gives the Cardinals another strong option in the outfield but will miss at least the first month of the season while recovering from knee surgery.

A six-time All-Star, Beltran began his career with the cross-state Royals in 1998, three years after Kansas City drafted him in the second round. The switch-hitter has a .283 career batting average with 302 home runs and 1,146 RBIs.

"Beltran is a proven outfielder who obviously has been a tough opponent against the Cardinals for many years," St. Louis general manager John Mozeliak said in a statement. "It is going to be nice to have his bat and competitive nature working for us instead of on the other side of the field for the next couple of years."

Beltran faced the Cardinals in a pair of NL championship series, in 2004 with Houston and 2006 with the Mets. St. Louis won both series despite several big hits by Beltran.

With a chance to put the Mets in the World Series, however, he struck out looking to end Game 7 of the 2006 NLCS against Cardinals right-hander Adam Wainwright.

McCoy, Browns still dazed by Harrison hit

BEREA, Ohio (AP)— Browns linebacker D'Qwell Jackson doesn't expect Pittsburgh's James Harrison to suddenly get soft—or stop bending the rules.

Although Harrison had to sit out one game for his illegal helmet-to-helmet hit on Cleveland quarterback Colt McCoy, who is still bothered by concussion symptoms two weeks after the head-jarring shot, Jackson believes the Steelers' heat-seeking linebacker will continue to level anyone in his path.

"Harrison is who he is and whether you fine him, you suspend him, he's not going to change," Jackson said Thursday. "That's up to the commissioner to handle it the best way he knows how."

Jackson's comments came one day after an unapologetic Harrison defended his head shot on McCoy, who has not been medically cleared to practice and will miss his second straight game Saturday in Baltimore. Harrison also said the NFL should punish the Browns for allowing McCoy to return to the game so quickly.

Jackson was stunned by Harrison's comments.

"I didn't hear that. Oh, goodness," Jackson said. "It doesn't surprise me coming from Harrison. He's one of the guys that he's going to live and die by the way he plays. I don't know what to say to it really. You hate to see guys get injured when you hit 'em. I know it's a physical game, a fast, contact game. When a guy gets hurt, all bets are off. You want that guy to be OK. For him to say something like that, I got no comment for it. I'm going to leave that one alone."

McCoy, the Browns and the NFL, for that matter, are still shaking off the effects from Harrison's hit.

On Wednesday, the league announced a new policy that will require teams to have a certified athletic trainer in the press box to monitor play and help medical staffs evaluate injured players. The change was prompted by the Browns' treatment of McCoy, who was not checked for a concussion during the game and was sent back in after sitting out just two plays.

The in-game policy shift preceded former Browns running back Jamal Lewis and other retired players suing the league over brain injuries they claim have left them struggling with medical problems years after their playing days ended.

Browns coach Pat Shurmur has spent most of the past two weeks addressing McCoy's touchy situation. The second-

year QB has been coming to work every day, getting checked by Cleveland's doctors and participating in team meetings before being sent home.

Shurmur was asked if the 25-year-old has been advised not to play again this season.

"Not to my knowledge, no," Shurmur said. "He's like any player who is fighting back from injury."

If McCoy is cleared to play in Cleveland's season finale, he'll be facing Harrison and the Steelers, who will visit the Browns on Jan. 1.

Last season, after Harrison knocked out Browns wide receivers Mohamed Massaquoi and Josh Cribbs with concussions, Cleveland center Alex Mack accused the linebacker of "being cheap, being dirty." Mack wouldn't go that far after Harrison's hit on McCoy, and even said Harrison had cleaned up his game.

"He's improved," Mack said. "We really weren't watching for it. I didn't know it happened in the game, so it wasn't apparent to me that anything malicious was going on."

Mack, though, said Harrison's aggressiveness is pushing the boundaries of legality. When Harrison was suspended, the league said it was because he has had five illegal hits to quarterbacks in the past three years.

Mack believed Harrison could have avoided hitting McCoy so high.

"I'd say he's playing on the very edge of the rules," he said. "You don't have to use your head. You could shove him really hard in the chest and get the job done the same way. But there's something to be said about affecting the quarterback."

Shurmur would not comment on Harrison's claim the Browns should be disciplined for their handling of McCoy's concussion. The first-year coach was also asked if he was troubled that Harrison did not seem to be getting the message that his hits won't be tolerated.

"He plays for the Steelers, I would probably comment if it were a Browns player," Shurmur said. "You see and hear a lot of things and I think it's important that we all play hard, we play physical and we try to teach our guys to play hard, play physical and play by the rules."

"At times, we're all being educated as to what the rules are. The underlying deal is safety and we've gone through that here the last couple weeks. As coaches, we are all for players' safety."

Brook Lopez to have surgery for broken right foot



EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP)—The New Jersey Nets will be without center and leading scorer Brook Lopez for a couple of months because of a broken right foot.

Lopez, who did not miss a game in his first three seasons, was injured during an exhibition game against the Knicks on Wednesday and he will have surgery Friday.

The injury is a stress fracture to the slow-healing fifth metatarsal, the same kind of injury that New York Giants first-round draft pick Prince Amukamara suffered on Aug. 6 in training camp. He did not play in a game until Nov. 20.

"I had a long talk with Brook last night," coach Avery Johnson said. "He is not in great spirits but we tried to lift his spirits to let him know that, hey, this is a little bit of a setback but he could definitely have a big-time comeback. Hopefully, once we get through with the surgery and get back to rehabbing and he can heal up and we can get him back at some point this season."

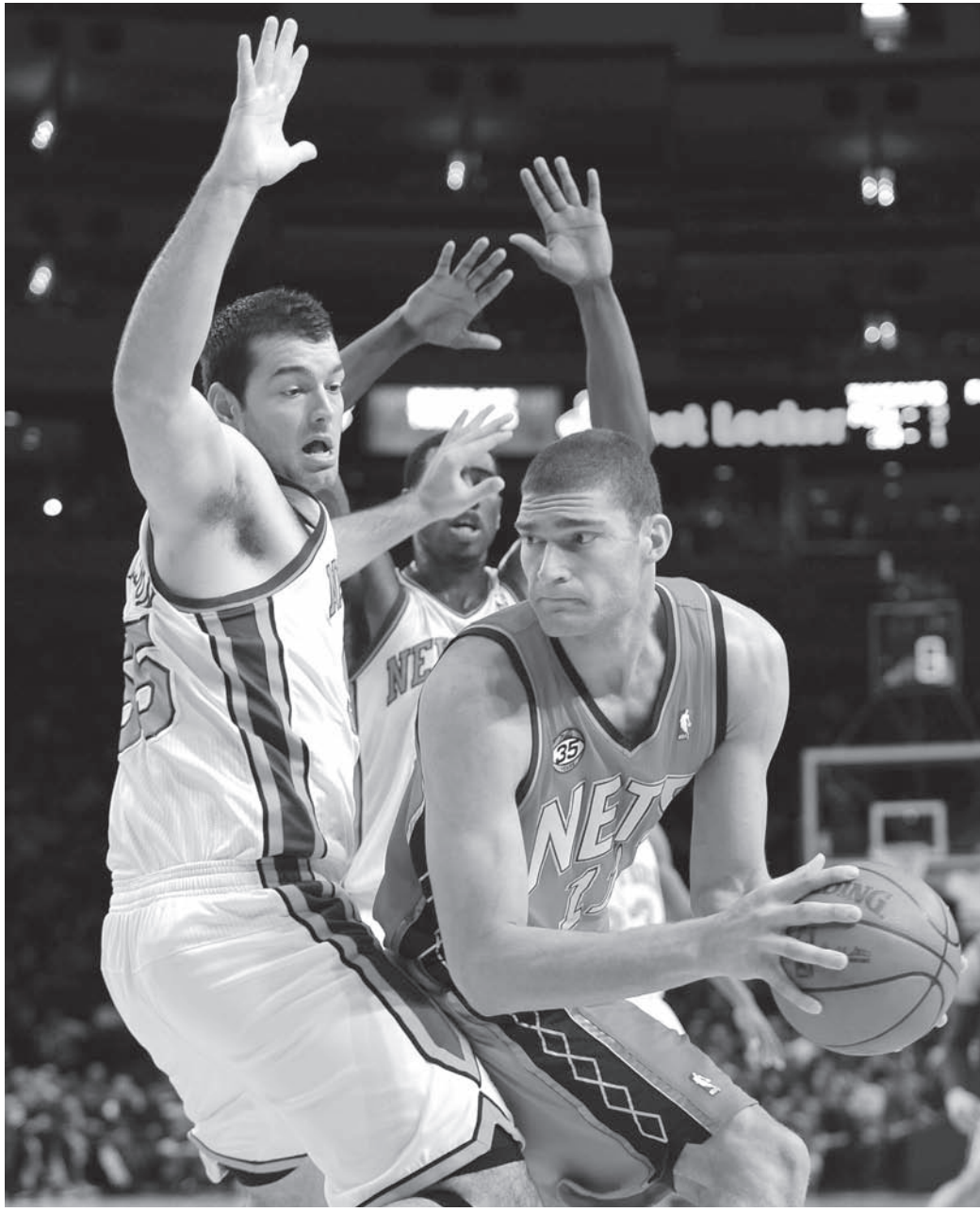
Lopez, who averaged 20.4 points, 6.0 rebounds and 1.6 assists last season as the Nets posted a 24-58 record, played in the second half with the injury.

To help fill the void, the Nets acquired Mehmet Okur from the Utah Jazz on Thursday for a second-round draft pick.

"Mehmet will give us added scoring and size," Nets general manager Billy King said in a statement. "His ability to shoot the 3 will help space the floor."

The Nets would not say how long Lopez will be sidelined but a medical expert said it would be from six to 12 weeks, but it has the potential of being longer, depending on the degree of the stress fracture.

Dr. Victor Khabie, the chief of the department of surgery and sports medicine at Northern Westchester Hospital in Mount Kisco, N.Y., told The Associated Press the problem with injuries to the fifth metatarsal is that the blood supply to that area is poor,



New Jersey Nets' Brook Lopez (11) tries to pass around New York Knicks' Josh Harrellson (55) during the second half of an NBA preseason basketball game, Wednesday, Dec. 21, 2011, in New York.

which prevents doctors from simply putting the foot in a cast.

"For that reason and especially with an athlete you want to get back as soon as possible, we end up doing surgery, which is inserting a metal screw into the bone to compress the bone together," Khabie said. "The act of inserting the screw also stimulates blood flow to the area."

Khabie said that Lopez's size may increase his recovery time.

"Biomechanics are such that with a bigger guy, the more pressure you put on it, the bone has to be more solid," Khabie

said. "It may not make a difference in the healing, but it needs to be more fully healed before you let a 7-footer start jumping up and down on it."

While he has not seen Lopez's X-rays, Khabie felt 12 weeks would be his best guess at a recovery.

"I think that would be early," he added. "If I saw him as a patient, I would say: 'Listen, hopefully, we'll get you back in three months.' I would say that would be a very optimistic type of call. This could be season-ending, potentially, seeing how short the

(NBA) season is."

The lockout-shortened season opens this weekend and the regular season concludes at the end of April. The trade deadline is mid-March, which is important to note.

The injury could hurt the Nets' chances of making a deal for Orlando All-Star center Dwight Howard. The Nets and Magic had some talks about a deal after the lockout ended and 23-year-old Lopez was said to be part of the package the Nets offered.

If he can't play, there probably is no deal.

Heat owner Arison cast 'protest vote' against CBA

MIAMI (AP)—Miami Heat owner Micky Arison revealed Thursday that he voted against ratifying the NBA's new collective bargaining agreement, saying that ballot was cast as a protest of how revenue sharing is expected to work in the deal.

Arison is the second owner to publicly disclose that he voted against the CBA, joining Dallas' Mark Cuban.

The NBA's Board of Governors approved passage 25-5, and Arison's "no" vote came after it was already assured that the deal would go through and the league would be back in business. In an interview with six Heat beat writers, Arison would say that he would vote the same way if the outcome was hanging in the balance.

"While I did everything I could behind the scenes, and some not so behind the scenes, to get playing by Christmas, when you come down to it, financially ... it's a tough financial deal for us," Arison said. "Particularly the revenue-sharing piece of it, the way it's structured. For us to have to pay revenue sharing to larger-market teams was disturbing. And we will. So that was a kind of protest vote."

Arison's announcement came tinged with one major caveat: He wanted a deal, and fought for a long time to get one. Miami, which lost last season's NBA finals to Dallas, enters this season as the prohibitive favorite to win the 2012 championship. NBA rules prohibited Arison from having virtually any contact with players during the lockout, but he said he felt they understood he wanted a deal.

Turns out, just not this particular deal. Or, more specifically, not the revenue-sharing aspect of this particular deal, even while acknowledging that it would help level the playing field in the NBA.

"I did everything I could, from both the owners' side and the players' side to get a deal done as quick as possible and to miss as few games as possible," Arison said. "So you've got to connect that with the 'no' vote."

The Heat made money last season for the first time in at least a decade, riding the boost that came from the first year of having LeBron James, Dwyane Wade and Chris Bosh on the same team. But the new deal will eventually have a punitive salary cap and revenue sharing designed to help the so-called "small market" teams.

In short, revenue sharing figures to hit Miami hard, even though Arison said he believes his "big market" club actu-

ally has a smaller market than Minnesota.

"While the original intent of the owners was to have a hard cap, which would have basically leveled the playing field, instead because of players' refusal to accept that they just made it extremely expensive," Arison said. "So now you have to financially deal with how expensive that is."

For nearly two years of negotiating, owners wanted things like a hard salary cap, the elimination of guaranteed contracts, rollbacks of current salaries and a massive reduction in the players' share of basketball-related income. After locking out players on July 1, it took nearly five more months to reach an agreement.

And there was a sense that some clubs wanted a deal that would essentially break up the Heat, or at least the pairing of James, Wade and Bosh. Arison said the Heat never thought that would be necessary.

"Obviously, I wanted to see a negotiation that led to something that we could have kept the team together," Arison said. "And it did. The fact is they made it expensive, but we can keep them together."

In a revealing 33-minute session with reporters, Arison said his relationship with owners around the league has included "some resentment" since Bosh and James decided in July 2010 to play with Miami. His cell phone rang once during the interview—"That was LeBron," Arison said, laughing, after ending the call—and he also insisted that voting against the deal will not inhibit Miami's ability to do business around the league.

He also said that it was easier for him to get over the Heat losing the finals than it was to deal with losing a series of playoff heartbreakers to the New York Knicks.

However, what's most important to him when it comes to the NBA right now, he said, is that the league is playing again. Miami opens in Dallas on Sunday, plays its home opener against Boston on Tuesday, and then Arison, who also is the chairman and CEO of Carnival Corp. will leave for—what else?—a cruise vacation.

"As a league, financially we're better off," Arison added. "Not as a team, but as a league. And players, financially, will be well off as well and will be the highest-paid athletes going forward like they have been in the recent past. So I think while it was a loss-loss for everybody to lose the beginning of the season and have the problems we had, it was a win-win to get going by Christmas Day."

1 more year: USC QB Barkley coming back



LOS ANGELES (AP)—Southern California quarter-

back Matt Barkley believed he was prepared to play in the NFL and the draft prognosticators agreed with him.

He had skillfully guided the program through two years of NCAA sanctions, put up big numbers to add his name to the list of great Trojan quarterbacks.

Barkley just wasn't ready to leave. He still had some unfinished business at USC.

Setting off a round of cheers at USC's Heritage Hall, Barkley announced Thursday that he's returning for his senior season, putting off the NFL for a chance

to lead the Trojans from under the cloud of NCAA sanctions to a BCS bowl.

"I am staying so I can finish what I started," Barkley said.

At 6-foot-2, 220 pounds and with a game that matured over three years at Troy, Barkley was projected as a high first-round pick in the NFL draft, an enticement that had lured his predecessor, Mark Sanchez, after his junior season.

Instead of following Sanchez's footsteps, Barkley took the route of former USC quarterback Matt Leinart and Stanford's Andrew Luck.

Leinart returned to USC after winning the Heisman Trophy and a national championship, and led the Trojans to the 2005

BCS title game, where they lost to Texas. Luck came back this season after being the Heisman runner-up last year and took the Cardinal to the Fiesta Bowl while finishing second to Baylor's Robert Griffin III in this year's Heisman voting.

Like those two, Barkley felt as though he still had goals he wanted to accomplish after leading the Trojans to a 10-2 record and a No. 5 ranking in The Associated Press poll.

Barkley let USC coach Lane Kiffin know about his decision with a Christmas ornament that had a picture of the two together during this season's game against Colorado on one side and the words "One More Year" on the back. His announcement

Thursday in front of about 200 people, including his family and Kiffin, set off a wave of applause and a quick burst from USC's band as a pair of cheerleaders danced along.

"That's not an easy decision," Kiffin said. "Not many people would do what Matt has done."

Barkley is the latest in a heralded lineup of USC quarterbacks that includes Carson Palmer, Leinart and Sanchez.

He had an uneven first season with the Trojans, making some questionable decisions that led to 14 interceptions. Still, Barkley threw for over 2,700 yards and 15 touchdowns to become the only freshman semifinalist for the Davey O'Brien Award as the nation's best quarterback.

Jail looms after holiday for Mayweather in Vegas

KEN RITTER
ASSOCIATED PRESS



LAS VEGAS (AP)—Jail is looming for champion boxer Floyd Mayweather Jr., who will give up his training schedule, club-hopping and relaxation in his million-dollar country club home after the New Year's holiday to serve a three-month sentence at the Clark County Detention Center in Las Vegas.

Mayweather's lawyers and his promoter-manager wouldn't say Thursday whether the 34-year-old Mayweather will file documents asking a Las Vegas judge to reconsider her decision to sentence the undefeated prizefighter to 90 days in county jail for domestic violence and harassment.

Las Vegas Justice of the Peace Melissa Saragosa on Wednesday called jail time appropriate for Mayweather for attacking his ex-girlfriend, Josie Harris, and threatening their two sons while the children watched a hair-pulling, hitting and arm-twisting argument in September 2010 at Harris' home. The judge ordered Mayweather to surrender Jan. 6.

Mayweather got credit for three days previously served in

jail and was ordered to complete a yearlong domestic violence counseling program, 100 hours of community service and pay a \$2,500 fine.

Jail will upset the routine of a man characterized by his defense lawyer as fastidious and "meticulous in how he presents himself," who practices and works hard, and whose "off then on" relationship with Harris is sometimes volatile.

Harris, now 31, lives in the Los Angeles area with the couple's two sons, now 12 and 10, and a daughter age 8.

Las Vegas police administer the high-rise Clark County jail in downtown Las Vegas. Officer Bill Cassell said Thursday that as a high-profile inmate, Mayweather will probably be segregated for his protection from the other nearly 3,400 other prisoners—at least for the first week.

Protected inmates are those deemed by jail administrators to be at risk from inmates in the general jail population, said Cassell said.

Behind bars, Mayweather will get a standard-issue blue jail jumpsuit with the letters CCDC and orange slippers.

He'll be held in a standard administrative segregation cell, about 6-by-10 feet, or "about



Boxer Floyd Mayweather Jr., left, waits for sentencing as his manager Leonard Ellerbe, second from left, talks with his attorneys in Clark County District Court, Wednesday, Dec. 21, 2011, in Las Vegas.

the size of a small walk-in closet," Cassell said. Cells have a bunk, stainless steel toilet and sink, a concrete desk with a permanently bolted stool and two small vertical windows.

Former football hero and actor O.J. Simpson was housed in a similar cell before and af-

ter his 2008 conviction in the armed robbery of two sports memorabilia dealers in Las Vegas. Simpson was allowed to have religious books and up to two other books or magazines. He is now serving a nine-to-33 year prison term at a Nevada state prison in Lovelock.

Cassell said Mayweather will be able to deposit any amount of

money into a jail account to purchase snacks, candy, soap and personal hygiene items from the jail commissary.

During his first week in jail, Mayweather would have about an hour a day out of his cell with access to an exercise yard, Cassell said. Depending on his behavior, the boxer could later get several hours

a day for exercise with other inmates also being held in protective custody.

Living in a cell of some 60 square feet would be a far cry from Mayweather's nearly 12,800-square foot, two-story mansion with two garages, five bedrooms, eight bathrooms and a swimming pool and hot tub. It sits on nearly an acre surrounded by green fairways and leafy trees at the Southern Highlands Golf Club several miles south of the Las Vegas Strip.

Good behavior and work time could knock up to 30 days off Mayweather's sentence, Cassell said, but the time behind bars will cut into training time for a May 5 date that Mayweather's promoters have reserved at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas for a Cinco de Mayo fight against an as-yet unnamed opponent.

The jail sentence also raises doubts about scheduling a long-anticipated fight between Mayweather and Manny Pacquiao, a fight champion from the Philippines regarded—along with Mayweather—as among the best boxers of his generation.

Mayweather returned to the ring in September after a 16-month layoff to win a controversial knockout of Victor Ortiz in Las Vegas, stretching his undefeated streak to 42 professional bouts.

FAJARDO

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Jang, Joe Demapan, and Frances M. Sablan with Balakrishna, Magofna, John Cruz, and Ray Dela Cruz taking the plum in Day 2.

In addition, SGA members performed what they call the Cupid Shuffle as a surprise for the Top 6 winners and their families, after which the Ten Most Wanted awards were called out.

Nick Sablan's raw score of 69 that worked into a 64 net gave him both the Lowest Gross and Low Net awards to go with his league-best 17 birdies on the year.

John L. Babauta and Ray San Nicolas each sunk an eagle and shared the Most Eagles recognition.

Manibusan took the Most Greenies award with six on the

year as well as most Longest Drives with five.

Tony Deleon Guerrero racked up the Most Wins with six and was acknowledged, along with Eun Jung Teack, for playing in all 14 events in 2011.

Other award winners included Highest Gross score winner Mac Chargualaf (116) and Highest Net score winner Frances Sablan (95).

Also during the banquet, Fajardo, vice president Larry Deleon Guerrero, treasurer Jose I. Sablan, secretary Frances M. Sablan, tournament director Joe Demapan, handicap coordinator Manibusan, and solicitation committee chair Edward Sablan were recognized for their leadership in 2011.

The group also thanked its board of directors, all 35 active members, as well as Kingfisher

Golf Links, Laolao Bay Golf Resort, Marianas Country Club, Duty Free Shoppers Galleria, Pacific Islands Club, Fiesta Resort & Spa, and a long list of other supportive affiliates.

SGA's officers for 2012 will be similar to this past year as many of its officers are returning to their posts.

Fajardo will remain at the head and has newly appointed Edward Sablan as treasurer, Nick Sablan as tournament director, and Balakrishna as solicitation committee chair.

SGA's annual membership drive is slated during the January Ace tournament. The date and location are still being determined.

For more information, contact Larry Guerrero at 287-1052, Joe Sablan at 287-4563, or any other SGA member.

RBC-IT&E

From Page 28

Roster limits are set at 12 players per team and organizers strongly suggest a minimum of 10 players per squad.

This is a full-court tournament formatted with either eight-minute quarters or 16-minute halves.

Games will start nightly at 5pm.

Trophies provided by IT&E will go to the top two placers in each division.

The RBC is also working in coming up with some other small prizes for participants.

Any local businesses that wish to donate such gifts that the group can use as prizes would be a greatly appreciated.

Based on past experience players seem to enjoy simple prizes such as food and water park and movie coupons.

In related news, the RBC recently held its Christmas Party at the Pacific Islands Club where they went swimming and shared a feast together.

While most RBC members are already a close-knit group of friends, the party was great way to get the new members and coaches to become better acquainted with one another.

The group also unveiled its new T-shirt printed with the new RBC logo.

A shield that symbolically protects the club backs the new emblem, while the basketball centered on the logo needs no

explanation.

A Chamorro Taga stone, a Carolinian *mwar mwar* and the Philippine flag are also present to exemplify diversity within the club.

In addition, three stars in the logo represent all of the graduated players that pioneered the club such as Tyron Omar, Vince Teregeyo, Robert Naraja, Kevin Cequena, Derek Aughenbaugh, Pete Iguel, Dan Barcinas, Zack Tudela, and Connel Pierce to name a few.

RBC organizers are currently preparing membership renewals for 2012.

Visit their website at www.rollersbasketballclub.yolasite.com or check out their Facebook page.

PASL season on break until Jan. 8



In observance of the holiday season, the Pohnpei Amateur Softball League suspended its games until Jan. 8, 2012.

As of Monday, out of 18 total teams there are only two undefeated squads left in the men's division.

Unbeaten G-Ballers top the standings with nine straight wins, but Natibu (8-0) is on pace and just a game behind.

Manelus and Mamaaw sit

tied for second place with identical records of eight wins and a loss.

Ur Balls hold the third spot with its 7-2 win-loss card, while Six Pack (7-4), San Roque (6-4), Olomwau (5-2), Gagu (4-3), Nadds (3-4), Haga (3-6), Sinaipas (2-8), Pingelap (2-8), Kame (2-6), Warriors (1-5), CP (1-6), Home Boys (1-6), and Fly Boys (0-9) make up the rest of the pack.

Meanwhile, Check It Out is the women's division frontrun-

ner with an 8-2 record.

Sakau (6-2) is two games back in second place and 670 Serepein sits comfortably in the third spot with its 5-3 slate.

Kongsigi (2-4), Enamo Meta (2-7), and Rookies (0-6) will be looking to rise through the ranks after the break.

All games are held at Capitol Hill Ballfield.

For more information, contact PASL's Tony Luzama at 788-9178 or 788-3349. (**Walter Cepeda Sutherland**)

PROA'S

From Page 28

sition on the specially selected Mythical 5 lineup.

As for Estolas, he shared the spotlight with Ol'Aces shooting guard Tony Diaz as dual Scoring Machines for the league, and took Most In Assists honors with a spot on the Mythical 5 roster.

Other Mythical 5 players included Konflikt-IT&E's Jawn Joyner at center, FGC forward

Lerio Pagarao, and Proa playmaker Dan Barcinas.

Other individual awardees included Konflikt-IT&E's Elmer Esdrelon for Best In Steals, Mobil's Gyles Ruluc for Best In Rebounds, FGC's Zack Babauta as Best Defensive Player, Shot Block King Badong "Budz" Camacho of Blue Haus-Satbahi, Sixth Man Award winner Bernard Aquino of Blue Haus-Satbahi, Andhok's Dexter Tenorio for Best In Sportsmanship, and Brandon

Talanía of Blue Haus-Satbahi as Darling Of The Crowd.

Game 2 between Proa and FGC took place last night; details will be released on Tuesday. If necessary, the deciding Game 3 is scheduled for Monday at 7pm.

Proa holds a one-game advantage coming into last night's match after taking the first game, 106-90, in overtime Wednesday night. A \$1,000 cash prize goes to the champion team.

MAYWEATHER

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very keen on a fourth fight with the Filipino; Miguel Cotto, who is seeking revenge from a 12-round stoppage handed him by Pacquiao in 2009; and World Boxing Organization light welterweight champion Timothy Bradley.

Against Marquez, whom he beat by majority decision last month, Pacquiao earned at least \$25 million. That would pale in comparison, however, to a projected Pacquiao earnings of at least \$50 million against Mayweather.

Before Mayweather's guilty plea and eventual sentencing, Pacquiao had already agreed

to a smaller share of the prize purse and to an Olympic-style drug-testing just to lure Mayweather back into the negotiating table.

The Mayweather camp can still appeal the decision, but the motion would only prolong the court proceedings and endanger the chances of the Pacquiao fight pushing through.



Colts get past Houston for 2nd straight win

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Saipan Tribune Sports

Brook Lopez to have surgery for broken right foot

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Fajardo is SGA Ace of Aces

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
walter_sutherland@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Mariano DLG Fajardo was hailed Saipan Golfers Association's Ace of Aces champion



during the season-ending tournament's awards banquet held last Dec. 9 at Pacific Islands Club Saipan's Charley's Cabaret.

Fajardo took the championship trophy and a year's worth of bragging rights after winning the two-day Ace of Aces Championship Tournament held last Nov. 26 and 27 at the Kingfish-

er Golf Links and Coral Ocean Point Resort Club, respectively.

The SGA president took the yearly championship after besting his nearest pursuers and fellow monthly winners Ray

Dela Cruz, Frances M. Sablan, Tony Deleon Guerrero, Edward Manibusan, and Jess Castro.

Castro and Manibusan, meanwhile, secured longest drive honors on Day 1 of the finale

with Steve Balakrishna and Bob Magofna each taking the prize on Day 2.

Day 1 closest to the pin winners included Manny Blas, Steve See **FAJARDO** on Page 27

Proa's Iguel wins MVP award

» **Estolas takes scoring crown, most assists**

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
walter_sutherland@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Proa forward Pete Iguel and Mobil point guard Jun Estolas came

out as the most decorated players in the Garapan Basketball League's IT&E Cup regular season

awards ceremony held during halftime of Game 1 of the best-of-three championship series Wednesday night at the Garapan Basketball Court.

IGUEL was hailed as both the regular season most valuable player and best player of the IT&E Cup conference. He also was awarded Best In 3-Point Shot and naturally landed a po-



Iguel



Estolas

See **PROA'S** on Page 27

See **PROA'S** on Page 27

RBC-IT&E Christmas tourney set for Dec. 28-30

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

The Rollers Basketball Club will hold its 2nd Annual IT&E Christmas Youth Friendly Basketball Tournament from Dec. 28 to 30 at the Garapan Basketball Court.

The event is open to all U10, U12, and U15 boys players with female players up to 18 years of age also eligible to enter.

The entrance fee is \$10 per player, as organizers need to shoulder the cost for referees, however RBC members will be volunteering as table officials.

The deadline to register is Tuesday. See **RBC-IT&E** on Page 27



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Rollers Basketball Club members pose for a group photo with their brand new club T-shirts last Sunday during their Christmas party at the Pacific Islands Club.



AP

World Boxing Champion Manny Pacquiao raises a hand of WBO champion Brian Vitoria after defeating Mexican challenger Giovanni Segura during their title bout Sunday, Dec. 11, 2011 in Pasig City, east of Manila, Philippines.

Mayweather Jr. out as next foe for Pacquiao

By ROY LUARCA
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Manny Pacquiao should now train his sight on an opponent other than Floyd Mayweather Jr.

Much as the Filipino eight-division world champion wants to fight the unbeaten Mayweather soonest, the American justice system deprived him and the fight fans of the dream showdown until after the first half of 2012.

Lawyer Jeng Gacal, Sarangani Rep. Pacquiao's chief of staff, told the Inquirer Thursday that Mayweather's three-month jail sentence starting on Jan. 6 effectively quashed hopes of the megabuck bout happening in May—or even in June—as envisioned by the Filipino superstar's promoter Bob Arum.

“Apparently, he [May-

weather] is out of the picture,” said Gacal. “Unless a suspension [of the three-month jail sentence] occurs, there's no way for the fight to push through.”

Even that is wishful thinking as half of Mayweather's six-month sentence has already been suspended by Las Vegas Judge Melissa Saragosa.

With Mayweather unavailable until early April, Pacquiao and Arum may have to look for other candidates, who, however, will bring in far less money to the fight than the flamboyant American, the former pound-for-pound king.

According to Gacal, if Mayweather fails to get another suspension of [the three more months of his sentence], the short list of possible Pacquiao foe will be made up of Juan Manuel Marquez, who is

See **MAYWEATHER** on Page 27